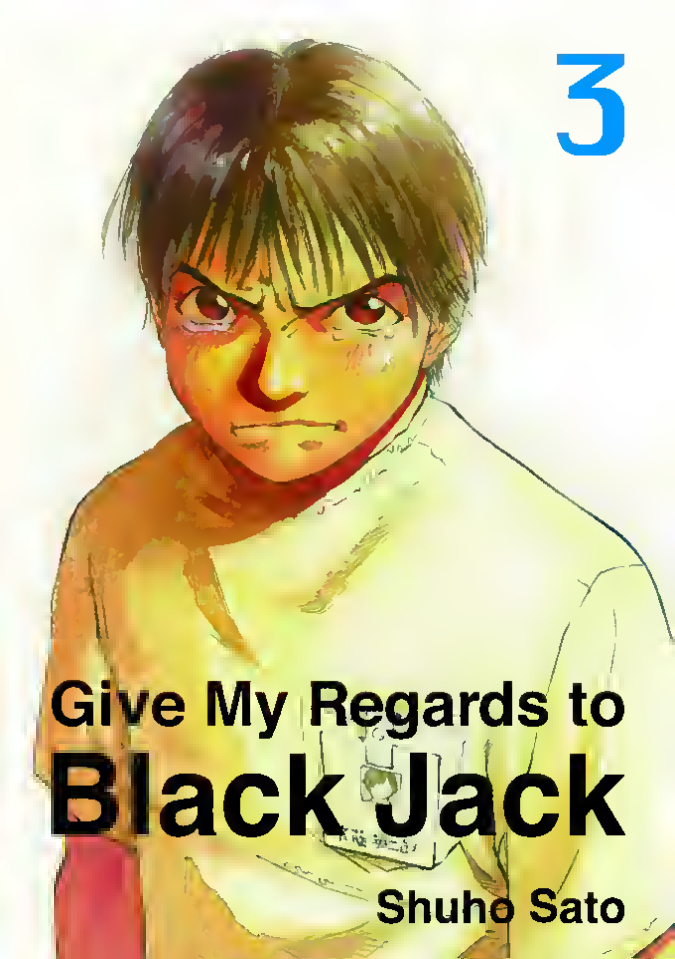

3
Give My Regards to
Black Jack
Shuho Sato

Give My Regards to Black Jack

Ep. 17 Restitution

Ep. 18 The Fool and the Poor Man

Ep. 19 Toku and the Doctor

Ep. 20 Work as a Local

Ep. 21 Change of Pace

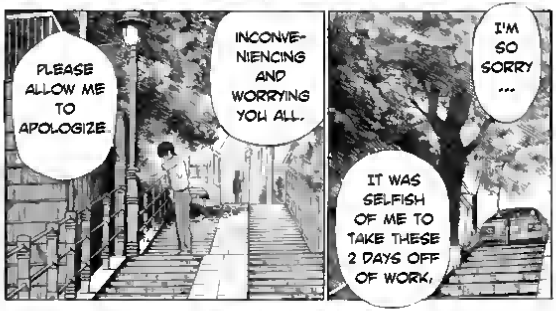
Ep. 22 Birth of a Battleground

Ep. 23 Father and Mother

Ep. 24 Fertility Treatments

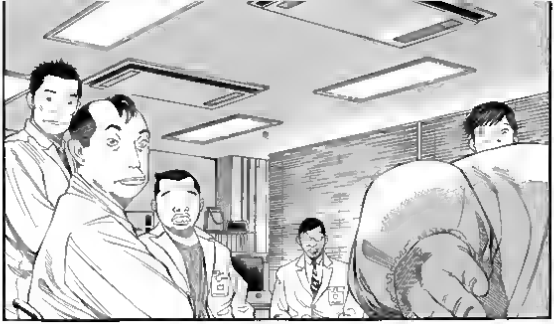
Ep. 25 Doctor Takasago

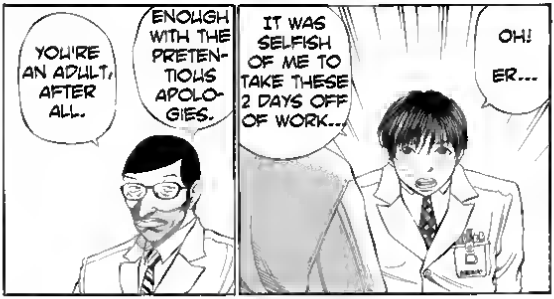
Ep. 26 Prediction and Results


I'M SO SORRY ...
IT WAS SELFISH OF ME TO TAKE THESE 2 DAYS OFF OF WORK,
INCONVE-NIENCING AND WORRYING YOU ALL.
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO APOLOGIZE

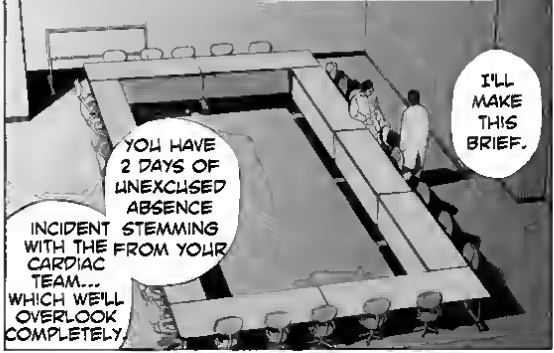
AND PLEASE...
FORGIVE ME.

#17
Restitution
I'M SO SORRY!




YOU'RE AN ADULT, AFTER ALL..
ENOUGH WITH THE PRETENTIOUS APOLOGIES.
IT WAS SELFISH OF ME TO TAKE THESE 2 DAYS OFF OF WORK...
OH! ER...

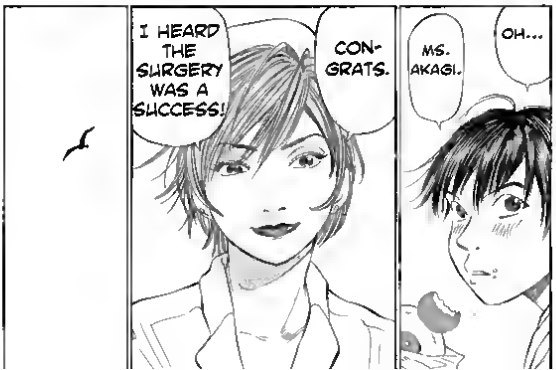
TODAY
I RETURNED TO EIROKU.
1ST DEPT. OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

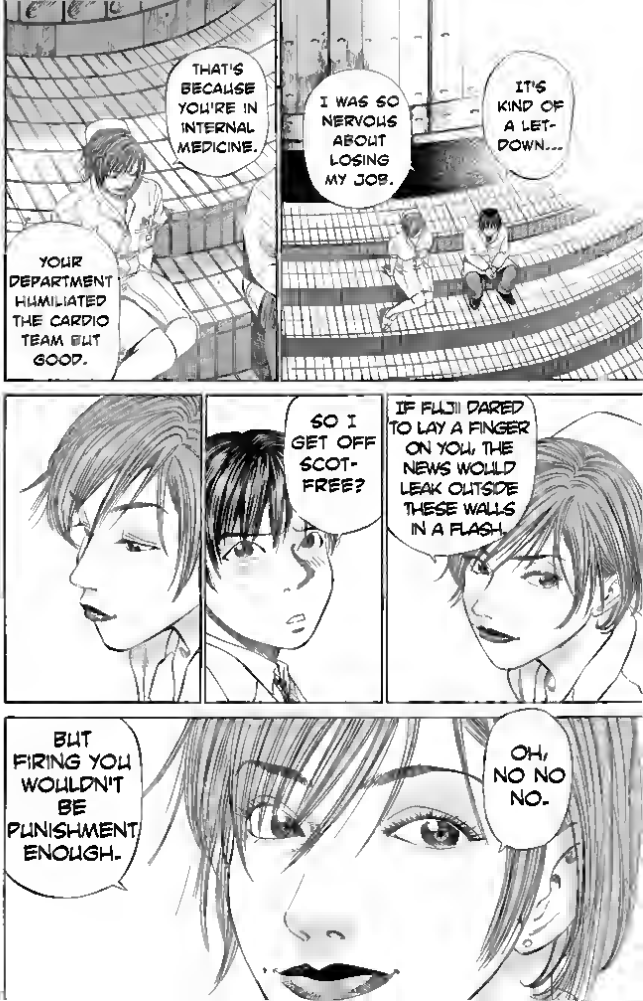

I'LL MAKE THIS BRIEF.
YOU HAVE 2 DAYS OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM YOUR CARDIAC TEAM... WHICH WE'LL OVERLOOK COMPLETELY.
INCIDENT STEMMING WITH THE

SO IT'S BACK TO BUSINESS AS USUAL.
DO YOUR BEST.

WOW, REALLY?
HEY, HAVE YOU HEARD?
THAT TAKES COJONES.
THAT INTERN'S BACK AGAIN!

DR. SAITO!

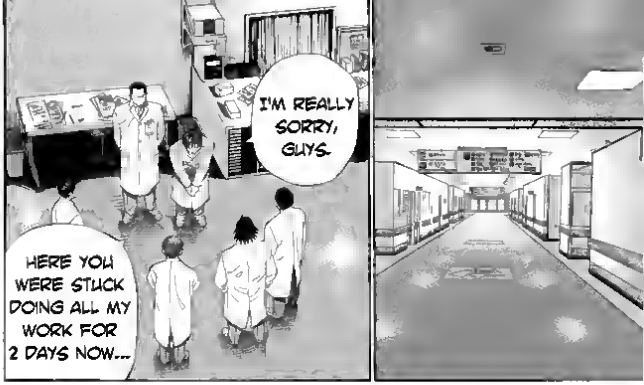

I HEARD THE SURGERY WAS A SUCCESS!
CON-GRATS.
MS. AKAGI.
OH...


YOUR DEPARTMENT HUMILIATED THE CARDIO TEAM BUT GOOD.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE IN INTERNAL MEDICINE.
I WAS SO NERVOUS ABOUT LOSING MY JOB.
IT'S KIND OF A LET-DOWN...
SO I GET OFF SCOT-FREE?
IF FUJII DARED TO LAY A FINGER ON YOU, THE NEWS WOULD LEAK OUTSIDE THESE WALLS IN A FLASH.
BUT FIRING YOU WOULDN'T BE PUNISHMENT ENOUGH.
OH, NO NO NO.

NO MATTER WHAT DEPARTMENT YOU INTERN WITH NOW,
THEY'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE MISERABLE, UNWELCOME.
AND EVEN AFTER YOUR 2-YEAR INTERNSHIP IS OVER,
NO EIROKU DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE YOU ON THEIR STAFF.
WELL, I DON'T CARE!
プリ
I'LL BE OUT OF HERE SO FAST IT'LL MAKE THEIR HEADS SPIN!
IN THIS WORLD, THAT DOESN'T SOLVE ANYTHING...

BUT AS LONG AS YOU'RE A DOCTOR, YOU'LL ALWAYS BE IN ITS SHADOW.
YOU CAN QUIT EIROKU.
IT'D BE THE SAME AT ANY MED SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.
RUMORS WILL ABOUND. YOU'LL BE TREATED LIKE A CRIMINAL.
NO.
HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS?

WHEN I MET DR. KITA,
FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, I WAS TRULY GLAD I'D BECOME A DOCTOR.
MS. AKAGI...
WHY WOULD YOU SUGGEST I DO SOMETHING SO DANGEROUS?
I GUESS I WANTED TO SEE
A DOCTOR WHO'D GO THAT FAR.

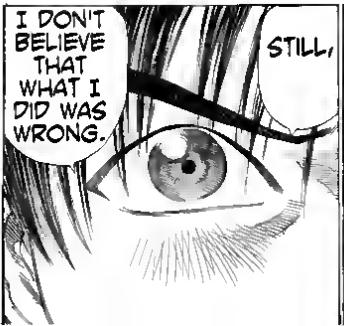

I'M REALLY SORRY, GUYS.
HERE YOU WERE STUCK DOING ALL MY WORK FOR 2 DAYS NOW...

OKAY, LET'S GET BACK TO WORK!
WE'VE BEEN PALS FOR 6 YEARS NOW-- SINCE COLLEGE!
AW, IT'S NOTH-ING!

OFFICE
ENTER.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I CAME TO APOLOGIZE.


I DON'T BELIEVE THAT WHAT I DID WAS WRONG.
STILL,

I WAS DISRESPECTFUL TO YOU IN FRONT OF A LOT OF PATIENTS.
AND FOR THAT, I'M DEEPLY SORRY.

I APOLOGIZE.
SEE WHAT THE MEDIA'S SAYING?
THE CHIEF WITH NO CLINICAL KNOW-HOW
SOMEONE WHO LACKS CLINICAL ABILITY SHOULDN'T RUN A MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ...
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

MINE IS THE RESEARCH SIDE.
EVEN NOW, MANY OF THE DOCTORS BELOW ME DEVOTE THEIR TIME TO CRITICAL RESEARCH.
AS YOU KNOW,
A UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IS BOTH A CLINICAL FACILITY AND A RESEARCH FACILITY.
I DON'T NEED EXCEPTIONAL CLINICAL SKILL.
MY JOB IS TO DOUBLE THE RESEARCH DONE IN OUR CLASS-ROOMS.
SO BY ALL MEANS, GIVE YOURSELF A PAT ON THE BACK.
THE ONLY PATIENTS YOU CAN SAVE
ARE THE ONES YOU HAPPEN TO MEET.

MY RESEARCH ALONE
HAS ALREADY SAVED UNTOLD MILLIONS.
KNOCK
KNOCK

there must be millions of people with this condition throughout Japan.
When you think about it...
How many of 'em were lucky enough to find a doctor they can trust?
Yep, finding a good doctor...
Everything hinges on that, doesn't it
The only ones I can save
are the ones I happen to meet

Can I even go on being a doctor?
SUPPLIES

MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH

MICHIBA?
THAT'S HISAYOSHI MICHIBA.
HE'S AN INTERNIN IN 1ST INTERNAL, LIKE ME.
HE CAME FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL TO INTERN AT EIROKU, WHICH IS UNUSUAL.
OH...
BUT EIROKU
IS NOT KIND TO OUTSIDERS.
BINGE EATING...?

DON'T TELL ANYONE!
Don't...
don't tell anyone...
AND THE NEXT DAY,
MICHIBA WAS NO WHERE TO BE FOUND.

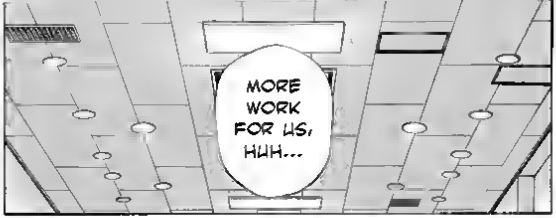
SQUEAK
SQUEAK
SQUEAK

OH, MICHIBA.
ARE YOU STILL HERE?
TH
TH

IN THE WEEK BEFORE MICHIBA DISAPPEARED FROM THE HOSPITAL,
HIS ONLY JOB WAS TO TAKE CARE OF THE LAB ANIMALS.

#18
The Fool and the Poor Man

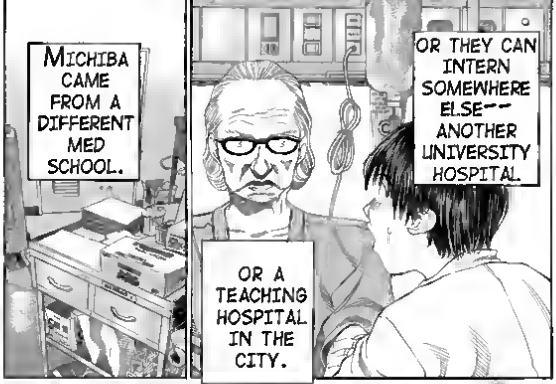
WHOA!
ALL THIS UNEATEN FOOD!
AND THE STENCH!
To whom it may concern:
I, Hisayoshi Michiba, do hereby leave Eitoku University
Please forgive the suddenness of my departure.
Hisayoshi Michiba
FORGET ABOUT HIM.
WE GET ONE OR TWO OF 'EM EVERY YEAR.


MORE WORK FOR US, HUH...

ガラ
ガラ
ガラ
60
検査
Quiet Lab

YOU COME TO A PLACE LIKE EIROKU, YOU BETTER PROVIDE EIROKU-LEVEL RESULTS.
THEN THERE'S THE PILES OF WORK WE HAVE TO GET THROUGH.
DOCTORS HAVE MORE TO LEARN AFTER THEY TAKE THEIR BOARDS THAN BEFORE...
YOU HAVE TO BE SHREWD TO MAKE IT HERE.

MEDICAL STUDENTS CAN GO ONE OF TWO WAYS AFTER GRADUATION:
THEY CAN INTERN AT THEIR ALMA MATER'S HOSPITAL,


MICHIBA CAME FROM A DIFFERENT MED SCHOOL.
OR A TEACHING HOSPITAL IN THE CITY.
OR THEY CAN INTERN SOMEWHERE ELSE-- ANOTHER UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.

SHOULDN'T SOMEONE BRING HIM BACK?

SEE HOW FAR THAT'LL GET YOU.
BESIDES, WE DON'T KNOW THE WHOLE STORY.
BUT I... I JUST DON'T WANT HIM TO QUIT.
I MAY NOT KNOW MICHIBA TOO WELL,
MICHIBA'S ATTENDING SAYS NOT TO BOTHER. YOU'D ONLY BE INTERFERING.

I'M DR. SAITO, AND I'LL BE YOUR DOCTOR NOW.
NICE TO MEET YOU, MR. SUZUKI.

WHAT, NOT ANOTHER ONE?
I JUST GOT A NEW DOCTOR A WEEK AGO.
I APOLOGIZE.
WE'RE WORKING OUT A FEW THINGS...

SO! HOW HAVE YOU BEEN SINCE LAST NIGHT?
PRETTY GOOD, I'D SAY.
YOU SEEM ALL RIGHT.
I'LL BE BACK LATER.

WOULD HEAR ME OUT FOR A FULL 30 MINUTES, EVERY SINGLE DAY.
DR. MICHIBA
IT WASN'T LIKE THIS WITH DR. MICHIBA.
So he was Michiba's patient...
Ah...
He wrote tons more than I do.
Michiba's charts...

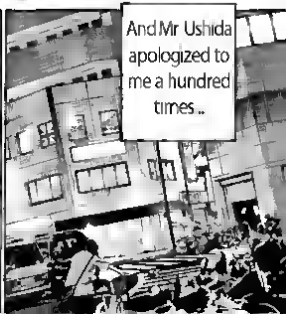
誠同病院

Seido Hospital

GOT A CALL FROM EIROKU.
?
SO WHAT'D YOU DO?
SAID IF WE EVER USED YOU AS A PART-TIMER AGAIN,
THEY'D NEVER SEND US ANOTHER DOCTOR.

All of a sudden, I was fired from my part-time job

NOW HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE A LIVING?
THEY'RE PLAYING DIRTY...

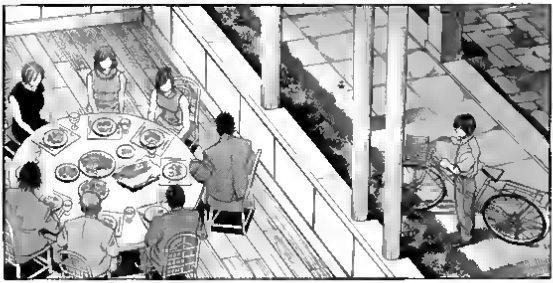

And Mr Ushida apologized to me a hundred times...

Why'd I waste my time worrying about other people?
Dammit ...
C'MON, CUT IT OUT!
ahaha ha!

AFTER ALL, IT TAKES $500-, $600 THOUSAND JUST TO MAKE IT TO YOUR MED-SCHOOL GRADUATION.
MAYBE... IN A WAY.
IS IT TRUE THAT DOCTORS ARE RICH?
OOH, OOH!

USUALLY THE NIGHT SHIFT AT A GENERAL HOSPITAL.
THEY TAKE A PART-TIME JOB.
DOCTORS WITH NO MONEY, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY DO?
NUH-UH.
IN OTHER WORDS, IF YOU'RE POOR AND CAN'T HACK IT ON A BAD SALARY, DON'T EVEN BOTHER.
BUT AN INTERN'S PAYCHECK IS INCREDIBLY TINY...

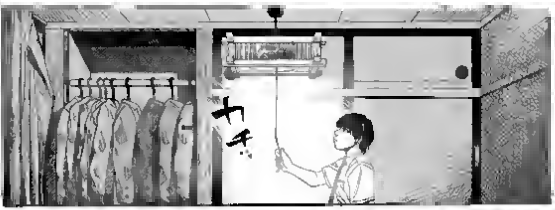
ALL THAT PART-TIME WORK, WORK, WORK...
YOU THINK THEY'LL EVER BE DECENT DOCTORS?



I see...
I get it now.

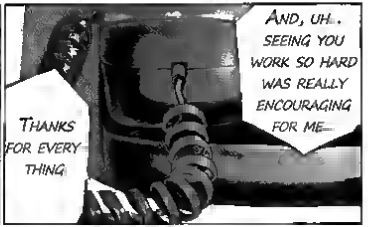
That's why Michiba quit--

because it's *that* kind of place.



UM... YOU'RE THE LAST PERSON I SAW, SO. I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE WORRIED ABOUT ME.
UH... THIS IS MICHIBA...

70
禁止


AND, UH... SEEING YOU WORK SO HARD WAS REALLY ENCOURAGING FOR ME...
THANKS FOR EVERY THING

YOU TURNED TAIL AND RAN--
DON'T PRETEND TO BE A GOOD GUY!

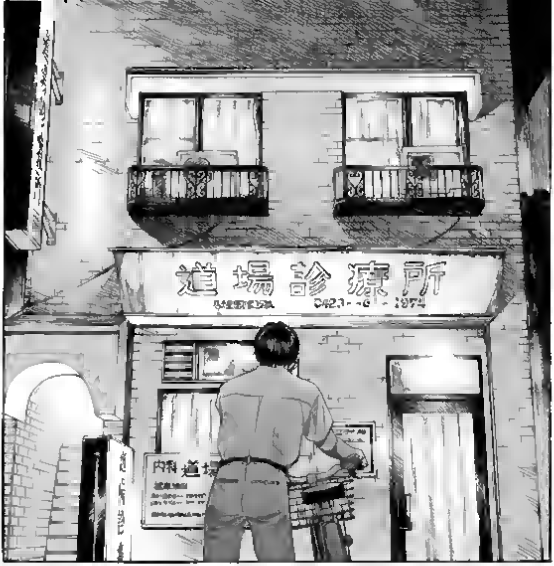
MICHIBA...
IF YOU DON'T PICK UP THE PHONE, I'M COMING OVER.
"I CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW,"
"SO PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP."
ROSSO
BEEPING
BEEPING

That's pretty far
Kokubunji, eh?
Intern Roster

GASP
Even if the rest of it was a disappoint-ment,
was it really that stupid, saving lives?
Michiba...
Was it that stupid, being a doctor?

I hate the way things are...
That's why I fight it.
You can keep your logic--
I'm going on my gut.

AND I...
I LOVE BEING A DOCTOR!



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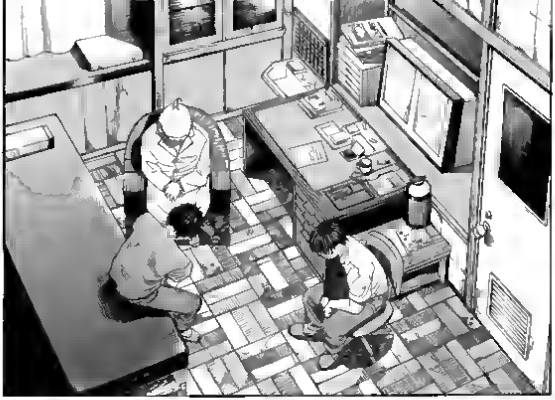
MICHIBA CLINIC

The late 1950s
DOCTOR!
I'M CURED!
MY LAST DOCTOR SAID HE'D HAVE TO CUT ME OPEN
BUT I DID WHAT YOU TOLD ME, AND NOW I'M CURED!
LOOK AT THIS!
SOMETIMES CHEWING EACH BITE OF FOOD 100 TIMES DOES THE TRICK
STOMACH ULCERS DON'T ALWAYS REQUIRE SURGERY
I'D PAY ANYTHING FOR YOUR MEDICAL ADVICE!
YOU'RE A MIRACLE WORKER!

#19
Toku and the Doctor
DONG DING-
DONG DING-
Shirt

DING-
DONG
DING-
DONG
ガチャ

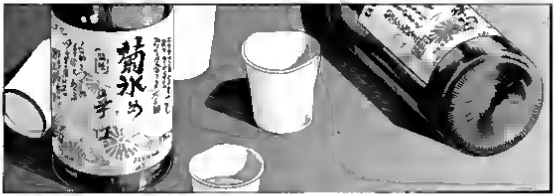
I, UH... PARDON ME FOR COMING SO LATE.
I'M SAITO, ONE OF MICHIBA'S FELLOW INTERNS AT EIROKU.
AND, UH...



LISTEN...
I DON'T WANT YOU TO QUIT THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.

I THINK IT'D BE A REAL SHAME IF YOU QUIT.
BUT IF THERE ISN'T,
I MEAN, UNLESS THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE YOU'D RATHER DO.
IT'S A LOT OF HARD WORK, BUT I LIKE THE WORK A DOCTOR DOES.
TAP
THINK
CLATTER

所
道場診療所

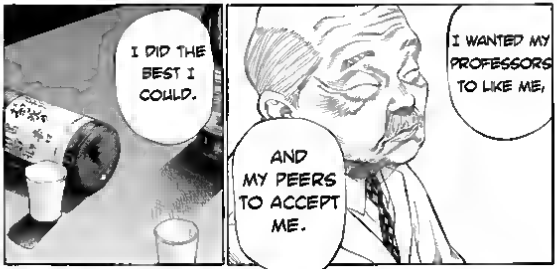

蘭氷

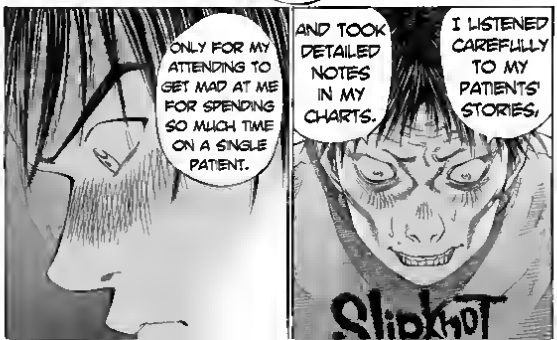
I...
I DIDN'T WANT TO WIND UP LIKE MY GRANDPA!

GULP

MY PARENTS BOTH WORKED, SO I WAS RAISED HERE IN THIS CLINIC.
ALL GRAMPS DID WAS TALK TO PATIENTS, DAY IN AND DAY OUT.
AFTER CHATTING WITH ONE PATIENT FOR 30, 40 MINUTES,
HE'D TELL THEM TO GO HOME AND REST.
HE BARELY EVER GAVE OUT ANY MEDS...
HE ONLY SAW PATIENTS WHO GOT BETTER FAST--LIKE PEOPLE WITH COLDS.
WHAT FEW SERIOUS CASES HE GOT, HE SENT TO THE HOSPITAL RIGHT AWAY.
I DIDN'T WANT TO END UP
A QUIET,
POOR
BORING DOCTOR LIKE HIM!

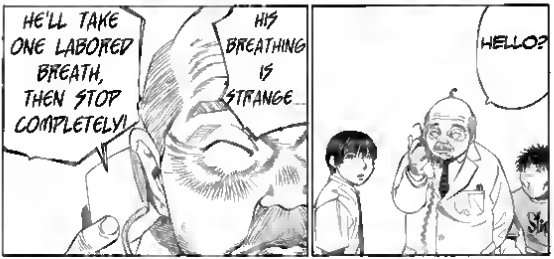
I WANTED TO DO CUTTING-EDGE MEDICINE AT EIROKU.
THAT'S WHY


I DID THE BEST I COULD.
AND MY PEERS TO ACCEPT ME.
I WANTED MY PROFESSORS TO LIKE ME,


ONLY FOR MY ATTENDING TO GET MAD AT ME FOR SPENDING SO MUCH TIME ON A SINGLE PATIENT.
AND TOOK DETAILED NOTES IN MY CHARTS.
I LISTENED CAREFULLY TO MY PATIENTS' STORIES,
Slipknot

YES, BUT THAT'S--
SHUT UP!
SO...
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?
I DOUBT ANYONE LIVES
EXACTLY THE WAY THEY WANT TO...

BRRRING
BRRING

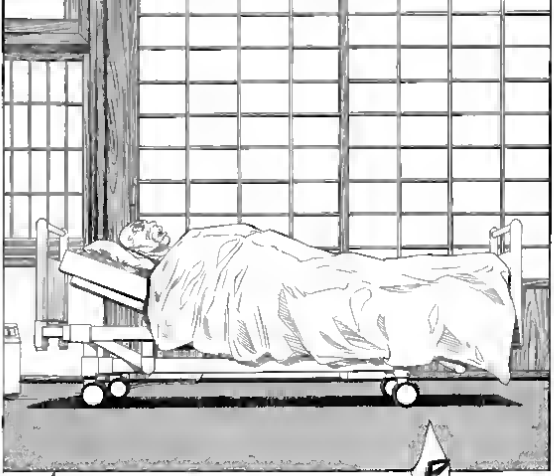

HE'LL TAKE ONE LABORED BREATH, THEN STOP COMPLETELY!
HIS BREATHING IS STRANGE...
HELLO?

ISN'T THIS DRUNK DRIVING!?
HEY, MISTER!
フラ
ス
ハァ…
バス

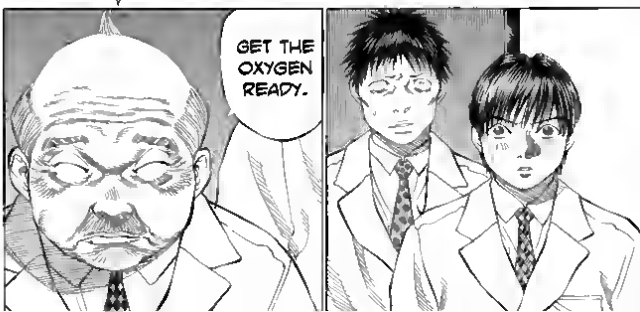
VEEH
CLINK
CLINKKK

BE QUIET AND COME WITH ME.
YOU'LL BE MY NURSES TONIGHT.

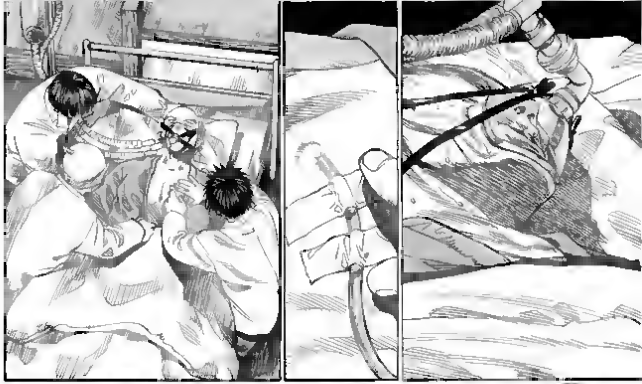
RATTLE
PLEASE HELP HIM, DOCTOR!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!
I..
It's huge..

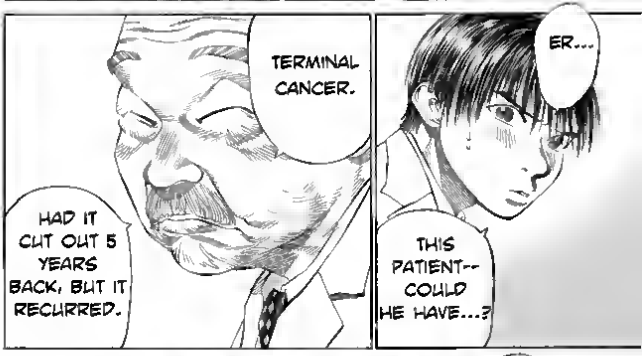


PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT


GET THE OXYGEN READY.

Ah, the quack has arrived.
Who'd have thought this old fart could be a doctor?
MEDICAL LICENSES DON'T EXPIRE.
SORRY.




ER...
THIS PATIENT-- COULD HE HAVE...?
TERMINAL CANCER.
HAD IT CUT OUT 5 YEARS BACK, BUT IT RECURRED.

HE'D BEEN STAYING IN A BIG HOSPITAL IN THE CITY.
BUT THEY HAD TO GO AND CHECK HIM OUT A MONTH AGO.

THE ONLY THING A DOCTOR CAN DO FOR A TERMINAL PATIENT
IS EASE THEIR PAIN AND MANAGE THEIR SYMPTOMS.
I'M SURE HIS HOSPITAL MEANT NO HARM...
BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN ROTTEN TO FEEL IGNORED LIKE THAT.
スー
ス

MR. TOKU...
IT'S BEEN 50 YEARS SINCE WE FIRST MET.
I HAD A LITTLE PRIVATE PRACTICE IN TOWN...
YOU WERE A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS-MAN...
KIND OF A BIG SHOT AROUND THESE PARTS.
IT'S NOT PNEUMO-NIA,
NOT FOOD POISON-ING,
AND IT'S NOT TONSILLI-TIS EITHER

GULP
NO, MR TOKU
I'M CERTAIN IT'S JUST A COLD
HEY! ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING, YOU QUACK!?
AND NO MEDICINE? THAT'S FAR TOO EXPENSIVE!
$4!?
THAT'LL BE $4
*(equivalent to about $100 today)

A TRULY SKILLED DOCTOR CAN CURE WITHOUT MEDICINE
BACK WHEN I CURED YOUR ULCER, YOU SAID YOU'D PAY ANYTHING
CURSE
GAH.. I SUPPOSE WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY..
18:00

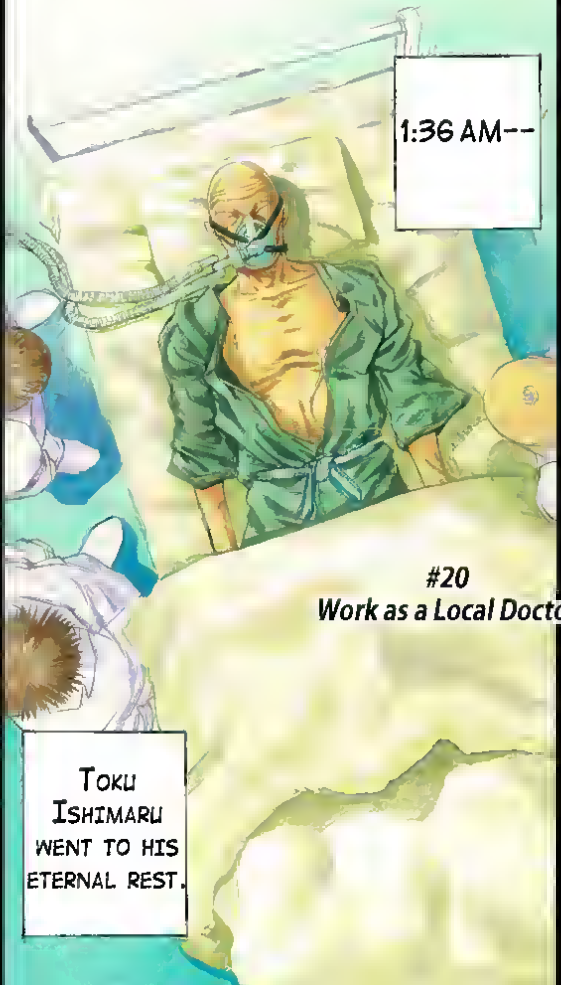
LET'S HAVE A DANCE TO MAKE UP FOR IT, THEN!
DOCTOR
I'M ...FRAID I CAN'T PAY FOR MY MEDICINE...
BEE
DOO
YOU'RE GONNA LET HIM GET AWAY WITH THAT?
DOO
DOO
B
A
B
O
O
I TAKE MONEY FIRST FROM THOSE WHO HAVE IT.
MR. TOKU... I'M NOT VERY FAIR.

HEY, DOC...
I WANT YOU TO BE THERE AT MY DEATHBED.

IT'S A DEAL.

MR. TOKU...
THOSE WERE THE DAYS...

As midnight approached,
Mr. Toku's condition grew steadily worse.
Pupillary light reflex absent.
Blood pressure immeasurable.
Heart rate down.
Respiration arrested.


1:36 AM--
#20
Work as a Local Doctor
Toku Ishimaru went to his eternal rest.

WIPE
WIPE
hic
sniff
WIPE
WIPE
WIPE
WIPE
WIPE
WIPE

CLANK
RATTLE
ゴト
ゴト
ゴト
WHAT THE HELL?
YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING.
AND HERE YOU'RE ALL "HEY, COME WITH ME"...
BUT YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING AFTER ALL!

I THOUGHT SO, TOO.
ONCE UPON A TIME.
IT WAS 1961.
JAPAN HAD JUST INSTITUTED ITS NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM.
RICH OR POOR,
EVERYONE IS INSURED,
AND PAY ONLY A FRACTION OF THEIR ACTUAL MEDICAL COSTS.
IT WAS SET UP THE SAME THEN AS IT IS NOW.

NOW, THAT COULD BE ANYTHING FROM APPENDICITIS TO A COLD.
AND THERE HAPPENED TO BE A STOMACH FLU MAKING THE ROUNDS.
HE RAN TO MY CLINIC ONE DAY WITH HIS 4-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, WHO SAID HER STOMACH HURT.
THAT WAS MR. TOKU, TOO, WASN'T IT...

I PATIENTLY SPOKE WITH HER AND LEARNED THAT THERE WAS A BROWNISH LIQUID IN HER VOMIT.
HER PAIN WAS DIFFERENT THAN USUAL.
BUT I SUSPECTED IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING ELSE.

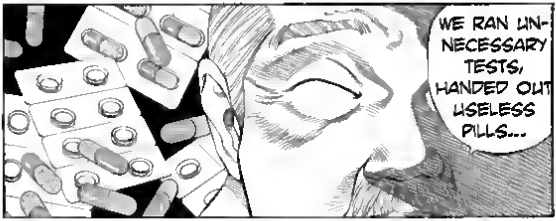
I TOLD MR. TOKU TO TAKE HER TO A SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL RIGHT AWAY.
THAT WAS A SURE SIGN OF INTUSSUSCEPTION.
I CHECKED HER STOOL AND FOUND BLOOD IN IT.

AND YOU KNOW...
THE WHOLE THING COST ONLY 60 CENTS-
* about $16 today

A LITTLE SOMETHING CALLED "FEE-FOR-SERVICE".
THAT'S THE DOWNSIDE OF INSURED TREATMENT.

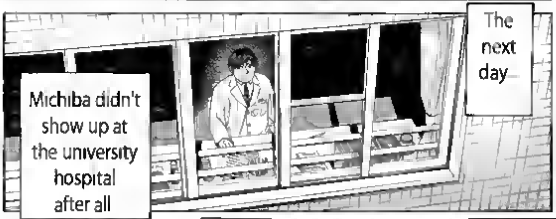
WHAT A WASTE...
THE SYSTEM DOESN'T EVEN RECOGNIZE THE DOCTOR'S SKILL.
IF YOU DON'T BUNDLE THEM TOGETHER SOMEHOW, YOU'LL WIND UP MAKING PENNIES.
EXAMS, INJECTIONS, DRUGS, WHAT HAVE YOU--

OH, WE DID. WE ALL DID.
SO WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST FORCE IT INTO A BUNDLE?


WE RAN UN-NECESSARY TESTS, HANDED OUT USELESS PILLS...

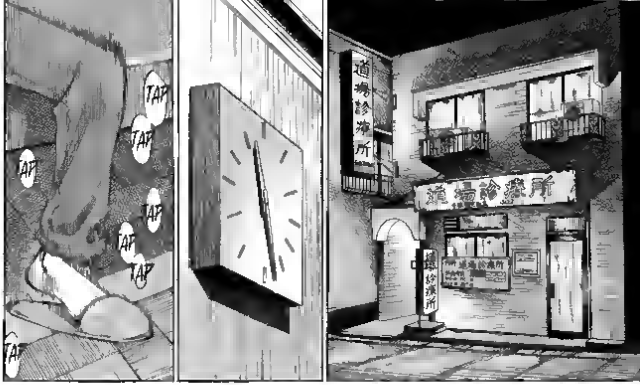
YOU DON'T EVEN BOTHER TO SAVE A DYING MAN...
WHAT IS A DOCTOR, ANYWAY?
THEN
WHAT IS A DOCTOR, ANYWAY?

MICHIBA...
I'LL BE WAITING.
I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT.
BUT WE CAN DO THIS TOGETHER.
I MEAN ...
YOUR GRANDPA'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU, TOO.


The next day—
Michiba didn't show up at the university hospital after all

Still,
was there really *nothing* his grandfather could do—?
watching his grandfather at work—like yesterday
Maybe he felt too helpless after all those years

TOK TOK TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
but ...
you can't hide...
What *is* a doctor,
anyway?


TAP
TAP
TAP

MICHIBA?
WHEN'S MR. TOKU'S WAKE?
TODAY.

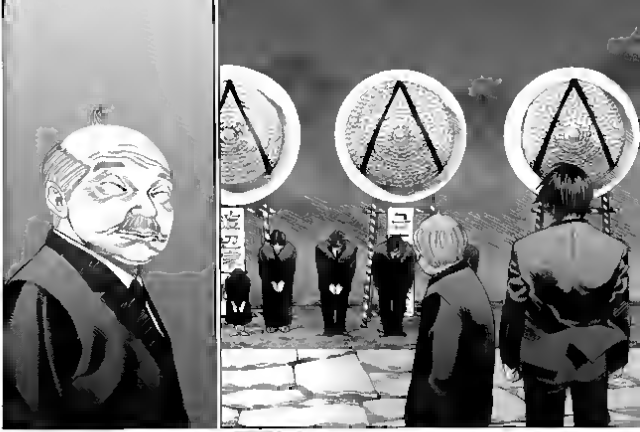
C'MON, LET'S FORGET THIS!
WE ONLY JUST MET HIM ON HIS DEATHBED--IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO GO TO HIS WAKE!
BUT
IF WE DON'T GO, NOTHING WILL HAVE CHANGED.

IF WE DON'T GO,
WE REALLY WILL HAVE DONE NOTHING FOR HIM!

I am
powerless.

All I
can do
is clasp
my hands
in prayer.

LET'S GO...
WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN.
!!
石丸家



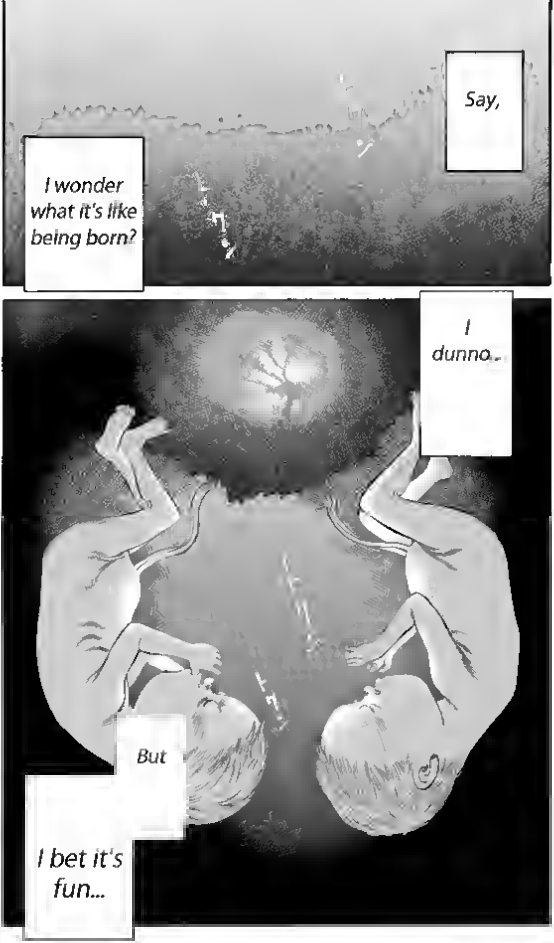
I get it

A doctor's work is more than that.
Saving lives... doing cutting-edge research
Healing sickness and injury
isn't the only thing doctors can do for their patients

It's simply
being a doctor...
It's seeing the same patient for decades...
It's being there when he dies... praying at his funeral...

永禄大学附属病院

Eiroku University Hospital


Say,
I wonder what it's like being born?
I dunno..
But
I bet it's fun...

WEE-OOO
WEE-OOO
WEE-OOO
#21
Change of Pace

BANG.

RATTLE
RATTLE

THE PATIENT IS ONLY 28 WEEKS PREG-NANT...
CERVIX IS DILATED 4 CM-- SHE'S WELL ON HER WAY.
HER WATER BROKE IN THE AMBULANCE.
BOTH FETAL HEARTBEATS ARE NORMAL, BUT HER CONTRACTIONS ARE GROWING STRONGER.
WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO REACH HER HUSBAND...

PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT

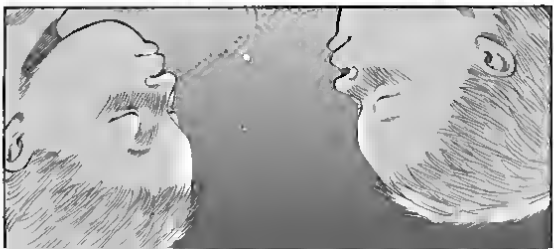
CALM DOWN AND LISTEN TO ME...
MRS. TANABE,

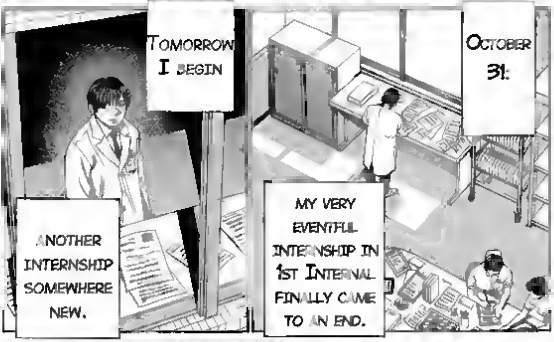
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
AND WE WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP YOUR CONTRAC-TIONS.
WE'VE CHECKED EVERY-THING OUT,

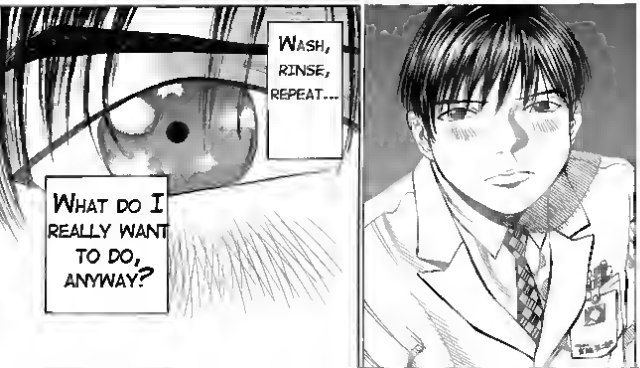
You mean it's happening? Now?
RIGHT NOW YOU'RE 28 WEEKS ALONG...
YOUR BABIES ARE ABOUT 1/4 THE SIZE OF A FULL-TERM INFANT...
IT'S WHAT WE CALL A HIGH-RISK DELIVERY.
STILL...
BUT IF WE PERFORM A C-SECTION RIGHT AWAY,
IF YOU END UP DELIVERING VAGINALLY, MRS. TANABE,
WE CAN KEEP THE RISK TO A MINIMUM.
I NEED YOU TO BE PREPARED.

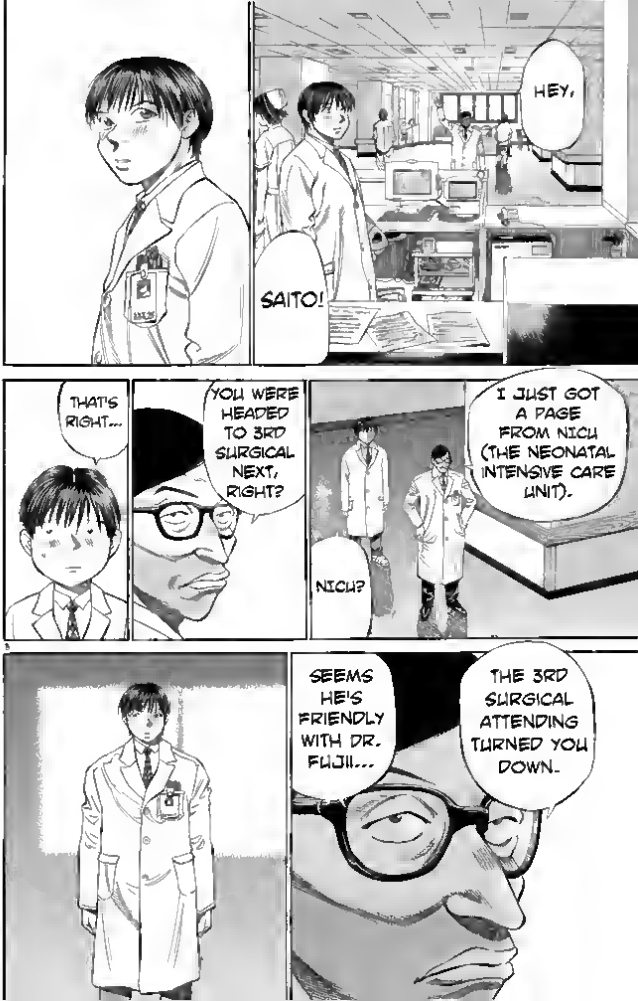
CHILDREN BORN PREMA-TURELY
CAN HAVE DISABILITIES LATER ON...

WHAT WILL YOU DO?
SHALL WE GO AHEAD WITH THE C-SECTION?

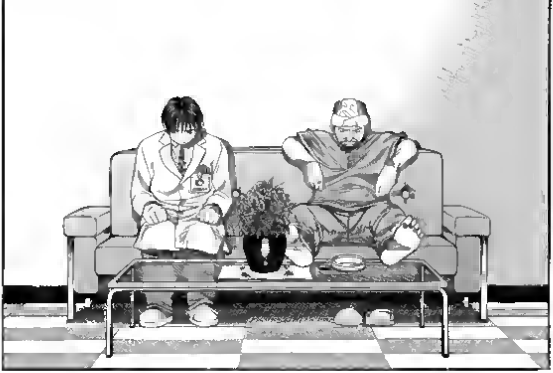



TOMORROW I BEGIN
ANOTHER INTERNSHIP SOMEWHERE NEW.
OCTOBER 31:
MY VERY EVENTFUL INTERNSHIP IN 1ST INTERNAL FINALLY CAME TO AN END.


WASH, RINSE, REPEAT...
WHAT DO I REALLY WANT TO DO, ANYWAY?


HEY,
SAITO!
I JUST GOT A PAGE FROM NICU (THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT).
NICU?
YOU WERE HEADED TO 3RD SURGICAL NEXT, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT...
THE 3RD SURGICAL ATTENDING TURNED YOU DOWN.
SEEMS HE'S FRIENDLY WITH DR. FUJII...

NICU
面会の準備は
Is that a diaper on his head?
Is..
SO
QUIT STANDIN' THERE LIKE A BUCKSHOT TURKEY...
SO THAT'S HOW HE WOUND UP WITH US
I'M TAKASAGO, AND I'M YOUR ATTENDING.
CANTCHA EVEN INTRODUCE YERSELF?



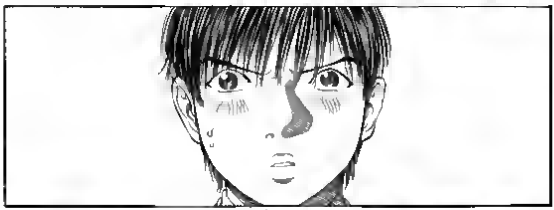
JUST 'CAUSE WE'RE SHORT-STAFFED DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE DESPERATE...
THESE TOP DOGS JUST DON'T GET IT...
ㄱㅣ
ㄱㅣ
ㄱㅣ

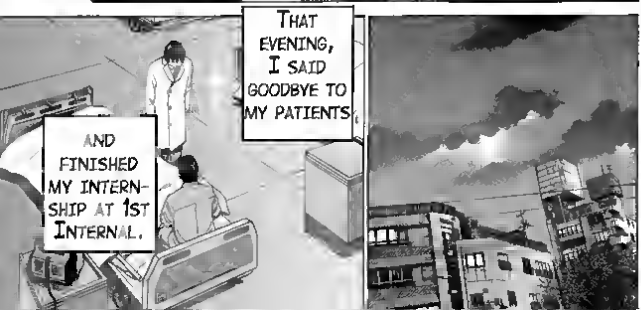
WHY DIDN'T YOU QUIT?
IF YOU HATE THIS PLACE SO MUCH...
HEY, YOU! PROBLEM CHILD!
HEARD WHAT YOU DID UP IN CARDIAC SURGERY.

AH. PRIDE.
WHY SHOULD I?
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
YOU JUST KEEP ON WORKIN'... NO COMPLAINTS...
ALL FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR ITTY-BITTY PRIDE
SO YOU WIND UP GETTIN' YOURSELF SENT HERE.
THAT'S REAL BIG OF YOU.
BUT?
...
BUT...
I DIDN'T ASK TO BE HERE!

I'M GOING TO WORK MY TAIL OFF!
BUT AS LONG AS I AM HERE IN NICU,
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...
PREMATURE BIRTHS, TAKING CARE OF PREEMIES...
HUH? WELL, UH...
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT NICU IS LIKE?
SO YOU SAY...

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT NICU
IS A PLACE THAT TRANSCENDS THE HUMAN REALM.

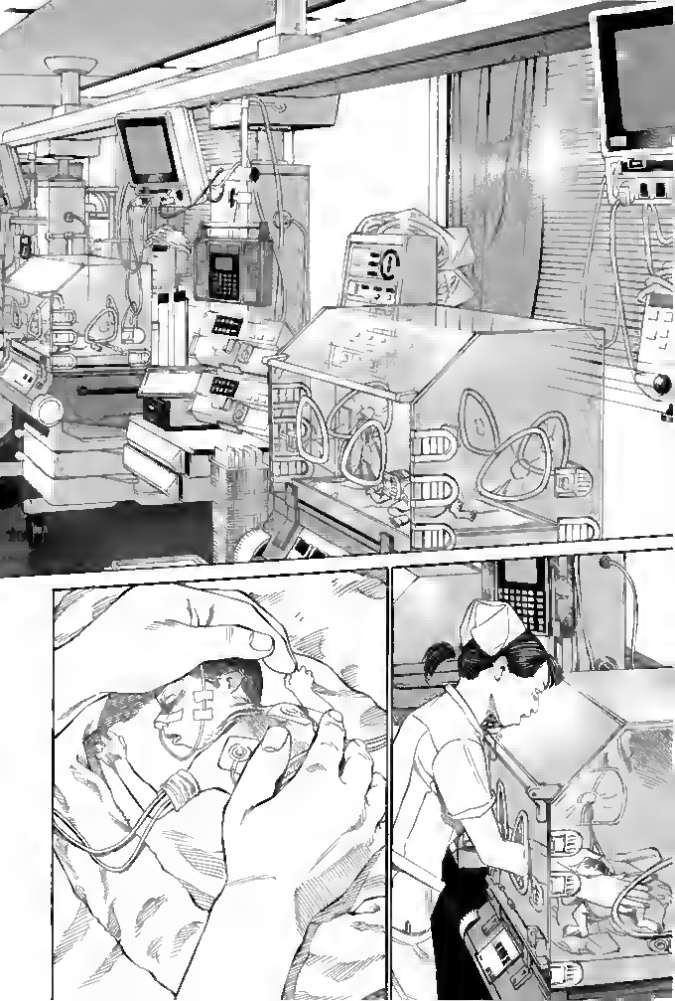



THAT EVENING, I SAID GOODBYE TO MY PATIENTS.
AND FINISHED MY INTERN-SHIP AT 1ST INTERNAL.

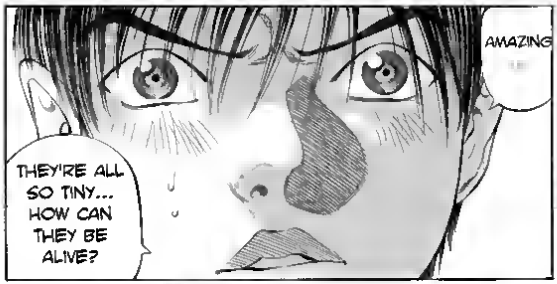
It's not disappoint-ing...
It's not all for nothing...

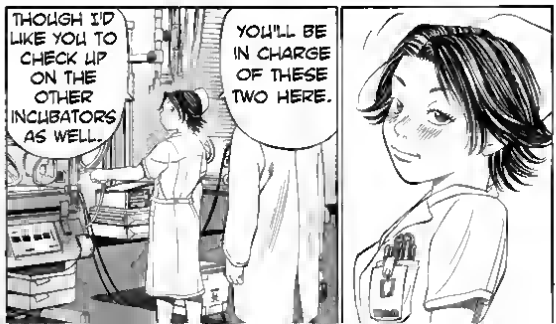
I WON'T LET THEM WIN.

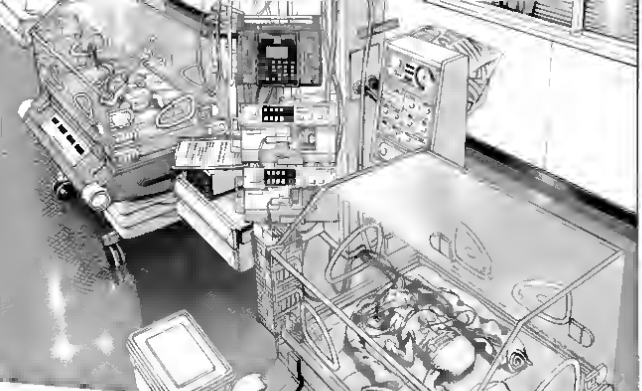
INTERNS SEEM TO BE GRAVITATING
TOWARD THE EASIER STUFF, LIKE ENT AND OPHTHALMOLOGY.
WE COULD USE ANOTHER SET OF HANDS.
GREAT!
PEDIATRICS IS ROUGH, NICU EVEN WORSE.
WE HAVEN'T HAD A SINGLE INTERN IN 2 YEARS.
HERE WE ARE.
That bastard...
DR. TAKASAGO WAS THRILLED!



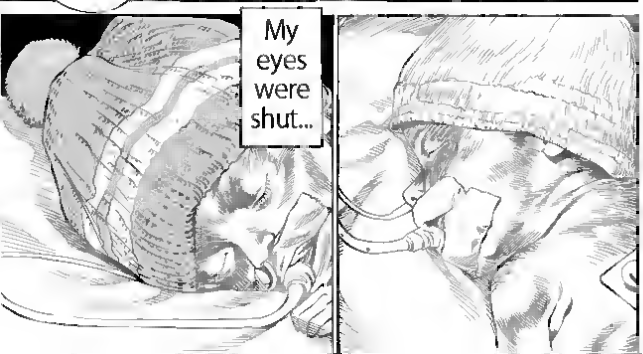
WE HAVE 9 INCUBATORS IN ALL...
THE PREMATURE INFANTS INSIDE ARE AT ANYWHERE FROM 23 TO 30 WEEKS.
WELL?

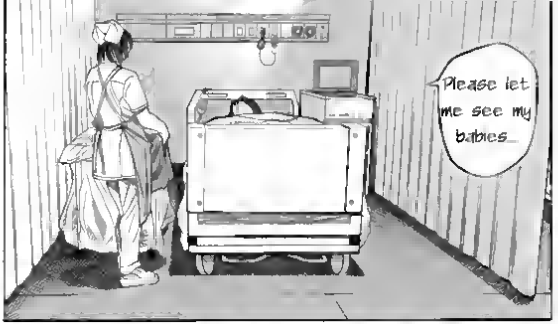

AMAZING
THEY'RE ALL SO TINY... HOW CAN THEY BE ALIVE?


THOUGH I'D LIKE YOU TO CHECK UP ON THE OTHER INCUBATORS AS WELL.
YOU'LL BE IN CHARGE OF THESE TWO HERE.



I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING.
FOR NOW, JUST SHADOW YOUR ATTENDING A ND LEARN HOW WE DO THINGS HERE.
TWINS, DELIVERED YESTERDAY VIA C-SECTION.


My eyes were shut...


Please let me see my babies...

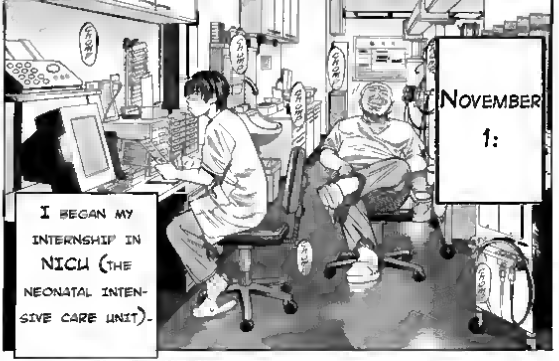
I'm begging you
I want to know how my babies are doing

My eyes were shut tight when I felt it:
A jolt to my consciousness.

HUH?
HUMAN?
WOW...
THEY REALLY ARE SO TINY.
HARD TO BELIEVE THEY'RE STILL...

THESE CHILDREN... THEY UNDERSTAND.
BUT DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE THEM--
I HEAR THAT KIND OF THING
A LOT.

#22
Birth of a Battleground


NOVEMBER 1:
I BEGAN MY INTERNSHIP IN NICU (THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT).

WHY'S NICU GOTTA BE NON-SMOKING?
SERIOUSLY...

DON'T BE SURPRISED IF IT CAUSES PULMONARY HEMORRHAGE.
BEEN IN RESPIRATORY DISTRESS SINCE THEY CAME OUT.
THEY BOTH NEED TRACHEAL NTUBATION FOR A WHILE TO HELP 'EM BREATHE.
ABOUT THOSE TWINS YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF...
I CAN'T SAY THEY'RE DOIN' SO HOT.

BEEP BEEP
THAT'S THE YOUNGER ONE'S MONITOR ALARM.
SOMETHING'S UP WITH THEIR HEARTBEAT OR RESPIRATION.
RUN!
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!
DAMMIT! HE STOPPED BREATHIN!
GET THE BAG--WE'LL DO THIS BY HAND!

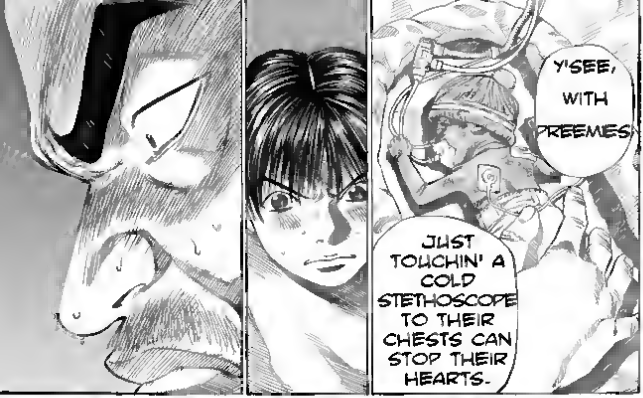
TOUCH 'IM GENTLY, GIVE 'IM SOME STIMULATION...
SSSH
GOTTA REMIND 'IM TO BREATHE.
SSSH
QUIT SPACIN OUT! GET THE VASOPRESSOR READY!
Y- YES- SIR!
1 GAMMA IS 1 MICROGRAM...
G- GAMMA?
WHAT'S A GAMMA?
PUSH 5 GAMMA OF DOBUTREX!
INCIAN. 4 GAMMA PER MINUTE!

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE JOB, PAL...
WHICH IS 1/1-MILLIONTH OF 1 GRAM.
ONE LITTLE SLIP AND THIS KID IS DONE FOR.

hah hah
hah hah

ALL SET...

WARMIN' UP THE STETHO-SCOPE.
hah hah
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
hahhh


Y'SEE, WITH PREEMES,
JUST TOUCHIN' A COLD STETHOSCOPE TO THEIR CHESTS CAN STOP THEIR HEARTS.

DR. SAITO!
MAN, I'M BEAT...

WHAT AN AMAZING WORLD...
AT THAT SIZE, DO THEY ALL MAKE IT OUT OF HERE OKAY?
UH-HUH
--MORE THAN 80% OF THEM.
SO THAT MEANS ...
THE OTHER 20%...
"THOSE TWO ARE FIGHTERS."
DR. TAKASAGO SAID SO HIMSELF.
BUT THOSE TWINS ARE ALL RIGHT.

ONE LOOK CAN TELL YOU
WHETHER A BABY WANTS TO LIVE.

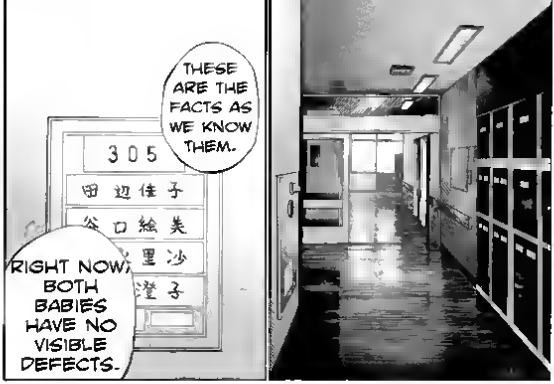
NO WAY.
ปฏิเสธ

BEEP BEEP
DON'T BE-LIEVE ME?
NO WAY
I'm tired. I don't wan-naaaa
"I"
ALL "I'M DONE FOR, SO JUST LEAVE ME ALONE".
WE HAVE SOME IN THERE NOW--

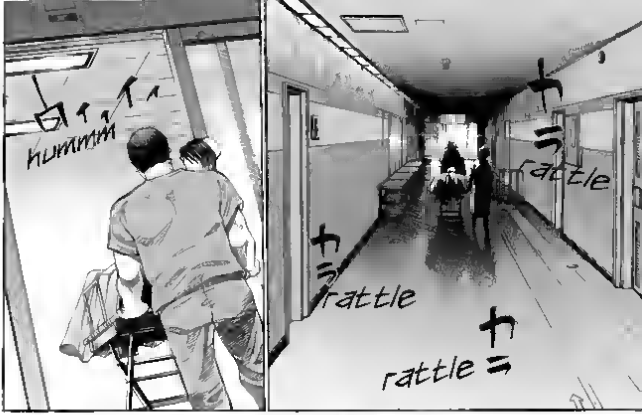
HEY...
WHERE'S DR. TAKASAGO!?
HE'S DOWN --AGAIN!
NOT AGAIN!
NO! YOU DO IT!
I'LL FIND HIM!
YES, YOU!
WHO, ME?
Touch him gently, remind him to breathe--

Come on...
Come on back...
Dammit...
This is never going to work!
What's the deal with this place?
I'm just too new at all of this...
If he could come back to life just by being touched, he wouldn't need a doctor...

I'm gonna
live...

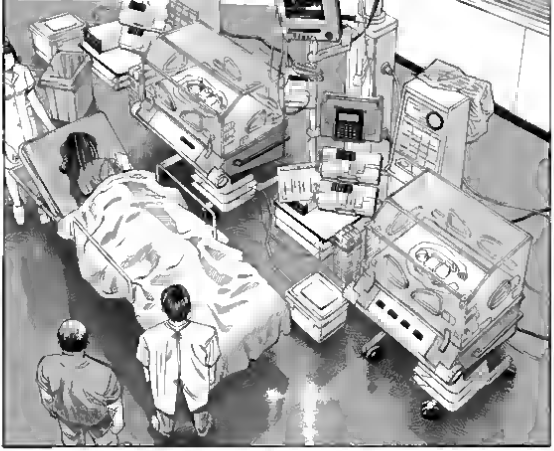

THESE ARE THE FACTS AS WE KNOW THEM.
305
田辺佳子
RIGHT NOW, BOTH BABIES HAVE NO VISIBLE DEFECTS.

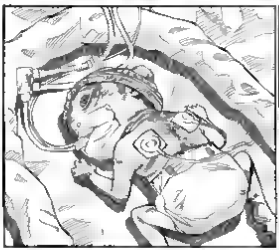
WOULD YOU....
WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THEM?

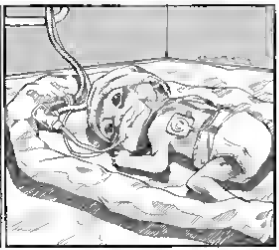

HUMMM
rattle
rattle
rattle

WE WERE IN FULL-ON CRISIS MODE OVER HERE!
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?!
OH, DR. TAKA-SAGO.

THIS IS MRS. TANABE ...
THE TWINS' MOTHER.





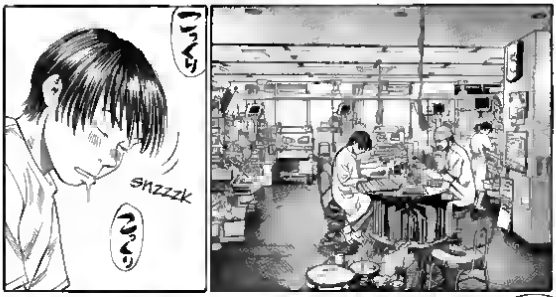


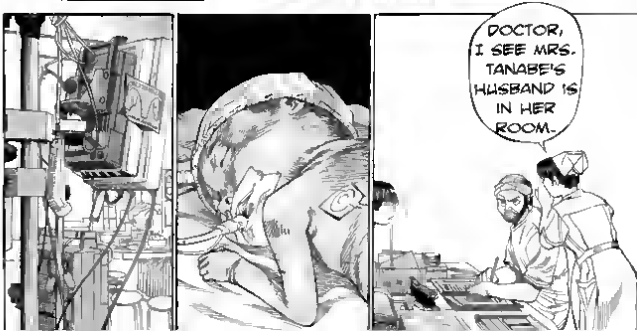
So small...

Forgive me...

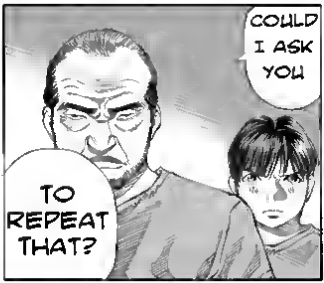
THAT WAS ODD.
MOTHERS ARE USUALLY A LOT HAPPIER TO SEE THEIR BABIES FOR THE FIRST TIME.
NICU
IT AIN'T THAT SIMPLE.
YOU'RE DEALIN' WITH A PREEMIE MOM.
IT'S BEEN 2 DAYS SINCE THEY WERE BORN.
AND THE FATHER STILL HASN'T SHOWN UP.
AND SOMETHIN' ELSE HAS BEEN BUGGIN' ME
WITH THIS FAMILY.

FWOOOOSH


ごくり
SHZZZK
ごくり


DOCTOR, I SEE MRS. TANABE'S HUSBAND IS IN HER ROOM.

SNIF
SNIF
SNIF


COULD I ASK YOU
TO REPEAT THAT?

SNIF
SNIF

WHEN MY WIFE GAVE BIRTH,
SHE WAS CONFUSED, INCAPABLE OF CLEAR JUDGMENT.

WHY
DID YOU MAKE HER DO THIS?

I REFUSE TO ACKNOWL-EDGE

THAT THOSE BABIES ARE MINE.

I'M THINKING OF MY CHILDREN'S FUTURE...

CAN YOU SWEAR THAT THEIR LIVES WILL BE HAPPY ONES?
IF THEY TURN OUT TO BE SERIOUSLY DISABLED,

PLEASE.
#23
Father and Mother
JUST LET THEM BOTH DIE.

ボリ
ボリ
NOW, THIS IS A PROBLEM

GO ON.
HUH?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HEY, SAITO.

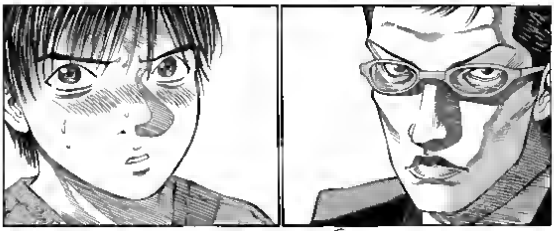
AND IT'S NOT A GIVEN THAT THEY WON'T BE.
Uh... er
It's not a given that they'll be disabled, so...

I'LL BE THE ONE RAISING THEM, NOT YOU.
But even if they are,
that doesn't mean they'll be miserable.
LOOK IN THEIR EYES--YOU'LL SEE!
THEY'RE GOING TO LIVE!
BUT THE BABIES REALLY WANT TO LIVE!

NON-SENSE.
THAT'S JUST YOUR EMOTIONS TALKING.
PANT
PANT
THEY SHOULD BE CULLED FROM THE HERD.
THEY'D NEVER SURVIVE IN THE WILD.
THEY CAN ONLY SURVIVE ARTIFICIALLY, HOOKED UP TO TUBES.
IS IT EVEN RIGHT TO GO TO SUCH LENGTHS TO MAKE THEM LIVE?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT.
HOW-EVER..
WHAT YOU SUGGEST IS LEGALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

IF WE WERE TO STOP TREATMENT AND LET THE BABIES DIE,
IT WOULD MAKE US MURDERERS.



I SEE ...
SO IT'S THAT KIND OF HOSPITAL.

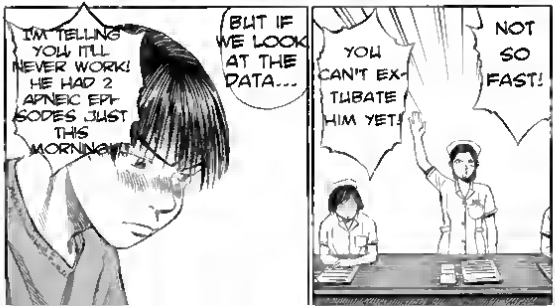
I NEGLECTED TO MENTION THAT I'M A LAWYER.
SLAM

WE'LL MEET AGAIN.

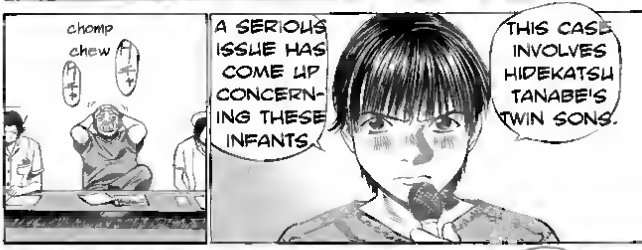
He knew.

CLINICAL CONFERENCE ROOM

WE'RE CONSIDERING EXTUBATING HIM TOMORROW.
AS OF 3 DAYS AGO, WE'VE BROUGHT HIS PEEP DOWN TO 3.
ONTO DAIKI NAKANISHI IN INCUBATOR #4


I'M TELLING YOU, IT'LL NEVER WORK! HE HAD 2 APNEIC EPISODES JUST THIS MORNING!!
BUT IF WE LOOK AT THE DATA...
YOU CAN'T EXTUBATE HIM YET!
NOT SO FAST!

NOT YOUR USUAL CLINICAL CONFERENCE, IS IT?
YOU'VE GOT NURSES HERE, ARGUING WITH THE DOCTORS...
YEAH...
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
WE NICU NURSES REPRESENT THE BABIES' MOTHERS, TOO.
NO SUCH THING AS STANDING ON CEREMONY FOR US.
HANG IN THERE!
SMACK
THE LIVES OF THESE CHILDREN DEPEND ON YOU!
WE ONLY HAVE THEM FOR A FEW WEEKS...

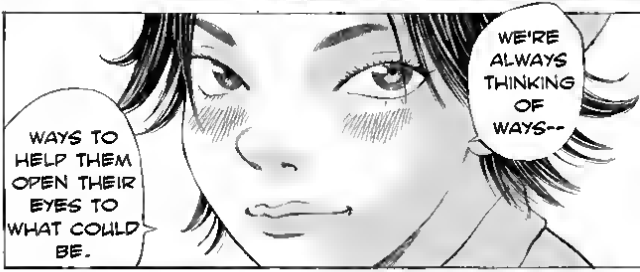

chomp
chew
A SERIOUS ISSUE HAS COME UP CONCERNING THESE INFANTS.
THIS CASE INVOLVES HIDEKATSU TANABE'S TWIN SONS.

AS IT HAPPENS, THEIR FATHER
HAS REFUSED TO ACCEPT THEM!
GRR

Why..
why isn't anyone reacting?
HUH?

THE SHORT STRAW?
SERIOUSLY?
NO ONE WANTS TO BE SEEN AS THE LOSER WHO DREW THE SHORT STRAW.
CLUNK
ガコン
ICE CREAM
IT'S NOT UNUSUAL.
YOU SEE PARENTS DISOWN PREEMIES SOMETIMES.

ONCE YOU'RE LABELED A LOSER, THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE.
EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE INFINITE POSSIBILITIES ...
ピンポーン


WE'RE ALWAYS THINKING OF WAYS--
WAYS TO HELP THEM OPEN THEIR EYES TO WHAT COULD BE.

TURNIN' BIRTHER AND BIRTHED INTO PARENT AND CHILD...
ICE CRE

WE GOT OUR WORK CUT OUT FOR US.

KNOCK
KNOCK
YOUR BABIES ...
THEYRE REALLY FIGHTING.
ER...
HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF ANY NAMES YET?

FOOP

I...
THE FIRST TIME I SAW A PREEMIE
I GUESS I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I WAS TAKEN ABACK, TOO.

BUT THEY REALLY ARE ALIVE...
AND, UH... WHILE I CAN SEE THE LOGIC IN WHAT YOUR HUSBAND IS SAYING,
I KNOW THAT I'M ACTUALLY AN OUTSIDER IN ALL THIS.
THEY'RE YOUR BABIES, RIGHT?

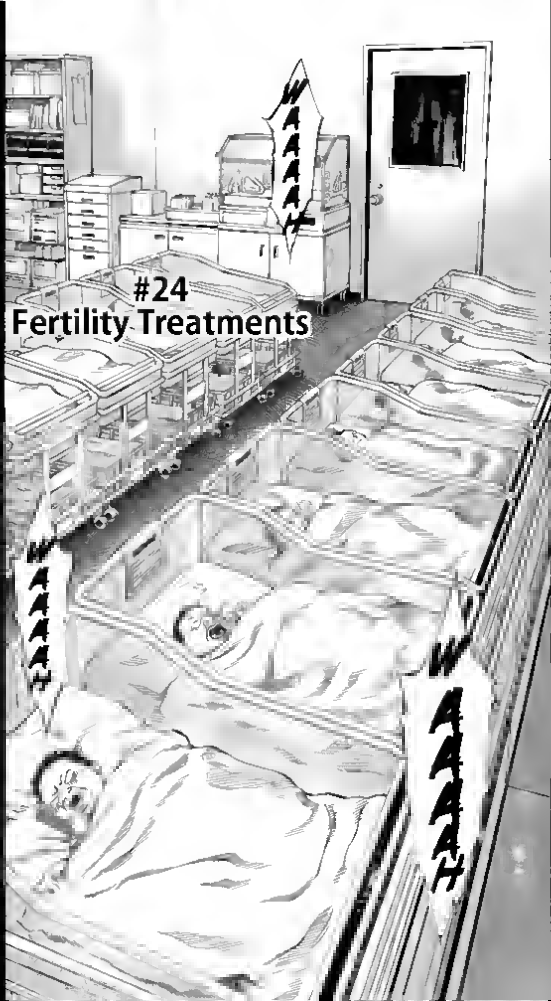
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR BABIES, MRS. TANABE?
flip
He bought cribs

I never imagined it wouldn't go well
The house is overflowing with baby things
But he went and bought two cribs
I said we should just rent them instead
they'd share their father's name: Hideyuki and Katsuyuki
Of course I thought about what to name them...
Now he won't give them that name of his.
But now that name...

I
I want so badly to hold them both

But
I'm so afraid...

tok
DO YOU GO PEE-PEE? HMM?
mmm
ALL RIGHT, MR. TANABE,
IF YOU'LL JUST USE THAT RESTROOM OVER THERE...
BY THEN, MY HUSBAND HAD BEEN
PERFORMING THIS HUMILIATING ACT FOR FOUR YEARS.


#24
Fertility Treatments
WAAAAH
WAAAAH
WAAAAH

WAAAAA
WAAAAA
HIDE-KATSU?
UM...
ARE... ARE YOU DONE?
EAH
HOW ABOUT YOU? DID THEY HARVEST YOUR EGGS ALL RIGHT?
UH-HUH
I HAVE A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THI -OSPITAL

WE WERE INFERTILE.

AFTER TWO OR MORE YEARS OF TRYING.

WHICH MEANS WE WERE UNABLE TO CONCEIVE

ガシャコーン

ガシャコーン

BUT WE STILL WANTED CHILDREN,

SO WE OPTED FOR FERTILITY TREATMENTS.

IN OUR CASE, WE LEARNED THAT MY HUSBAND HAD A LOW SPERM COUNT,

GIVING US PRACTICALLY NO CHANCE OF EVER CONCEIVING NATURALLY.

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION IS DONE EVERYWHERE NOWADAYS.
AND WITH 10 THOUSAND BABIES A YEAR BORN THAT WAY IN JAPAN
AFTER THAT, WE'LL ADD THE EGGS TO THE SPERM CULTURE MEDIUM TO FERTILIZE THEM.
THEN WE'LL PUT THE FERTILIZED EGGS BACK IN YOUR UTERUS.
TODAY WE'LL SELECT AND CULTURE THE HARVESTED SPERM AND EGGS.

SORRY...
IT'S OKAY.
IT'S MY FAULT
YOU KEEP HAVING TO GO THROUGH ALL THIS.
ding
ding
ding
ding
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I WANT TO HAVE YOUR BABY.

UNFORTUNATELY,
WE DON'T HAVE A PREGNANCY THIS TIME.
FOUR YEARS.
FOUR YEARS WE DID THIS, OVER AND OVER.

BUT NO KIDS MEANS LESS LAUNDRY AND A NEATER HOUSE!
I HEARD THE OISHIS ARE EXPECTING.
WHAT ABOUT YOU TWO?
THAT'S WHAT DROVE ME TO KEEP UP TREATMENTS AT FIRST.
TO BEAR THE CHILD OF THE MAN I LOVED--
USED TO BE MEN DIVORCED BARREN WOMEN.
ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU GAVE ME A GRAND-CHILD?

EITHER THE SEED'S BAD
OR THE FIELD'S BAD.
HEY, HIDE-KATSU
WHYNCHA LET ME GIVE IT A SHOT?
SUCH FAILURES...
AAAAA

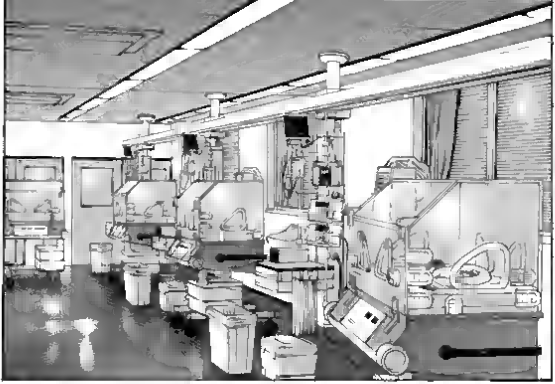
ARE WE...
DEFECTIVE
HUMAN BEINGS?

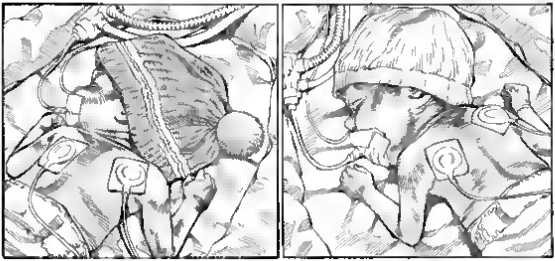
how overjoyed we were when we found out we were pregnant?
Do you have any idea

I was sure everything would be wonderful
I'd give birth, and everything would be over...

We tried so hard to make those babies
Why did they have to be premature-- maybe even disabled?
Why did this
have to happen to us!?
HE KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE WHOSE BABIES THEY ARE!
And that's why
THAT'S WHY WHEN HE SAYS HE WON'T ACKNOWLEDGE THEM AS HIS...

WHEN HE SAID TO LET THOSE BABIES DIE?
I was sad, but somewhere, somehow I was relieved
Two days he must have worried about us.
It took him two days to come to the hospital
My own babies--
and I was relieved!
How can I ever
accept those children into my life?





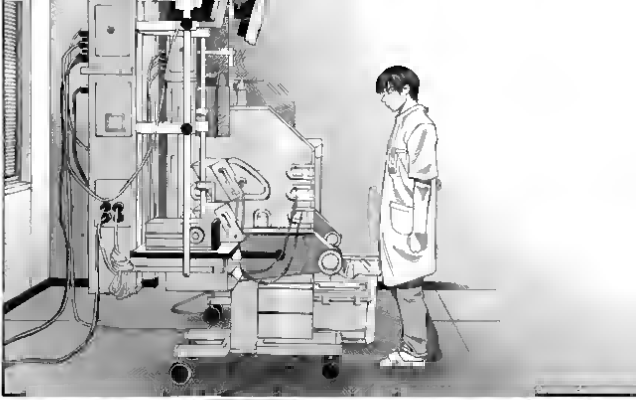
SO...
YOU DIDN'T SAY ANY-THING?
"I'M AN OUTSIDER! WHAT DO I KNOW?"
chomp
chomp

WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHIN' TO SAY.
CAN'T VERY WELL SAY ANYTHIN'
chomp
chomp
WHAT EXACTLY SHOULD I HAVE SAID?

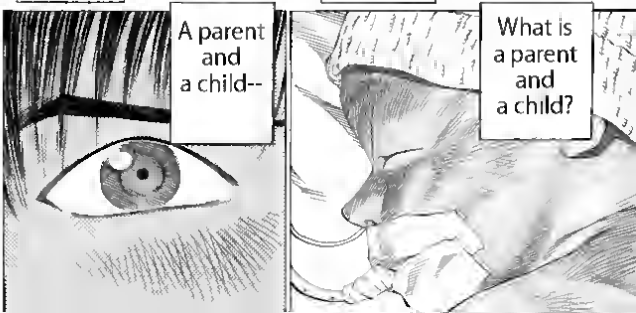
FIRST YOU GOTTA FIND YOUR ANSWER.

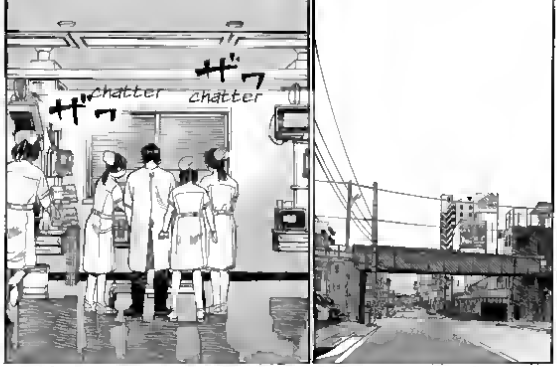
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHILD.
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PARENT.

FWOOOSH



If all life has meaning,
why were you two born, I wonder?
Hey...
Your mom and dad are really having a hard time.

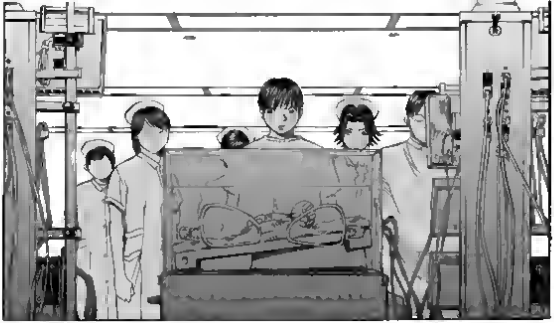

A parent and a child--
What is a parent and a child?


ザワ
chatter
ザワ
chatter

tok
tok
tc

THOSE TWINS REALLY DID IT THIS TIME!
C'MON, HURRY IT UP!
DR. SAITO!
WHOA! WHAT'S GOING ON?

THEY PULLED OUT THEIR OWN VENTILATORS THIS MORNING.
BOTH OF THEM.
CLATTER
No way.
They can't be ready to breathe on their-



zzz
zzz
zzz

THEY SURE ARE STRONG.
THEIR NUMBERS ARE STABLE FOR NOW...

WHY AM I JUST STANDING HERE?

These children are trying to live--
and I won't let anyone stop them!

THEY'RE DEVELOPING THEIR OWN PERSONALITIES.
SURE THEY ARE.
THEY MAY BE TWINS, BUT THEY'RE A LITTLE DIFFERENT...
THEY'RE FRATERNAL, NOT IDENTICAL.

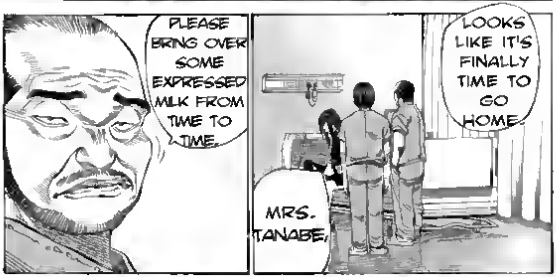
THE OLDER ONE IS ALWAYS WORRIED ABOUT THE YOUNGER.
HUH?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...

I BET HE'S A NICE BOY, AND A GOOD BIG BROTHER.

HE JUST SLEEPS, NEVER NOTICING HIS BROTHER'S CONCERN...
BUT HIS LITTLE BROTHER IS SO LAID BACK.

#25
Doctor Takasago

splosh
0.5 ML OF MILK 3 HOURS APART, 8 TIMES A DAY.
WE'LL SEE HOW THEY DO AND GRADUALLY INCREASE THE AMOUNT.
TODAY THEY'RE GONNA START NURSING.
NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR A BABY'S GROWTH AND GIVES 'EM IMMUNITY,
BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY CAN ONLY GET IT FROM THEIR MOTHER.
MOTHER'S MILK IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THAN AN IV.


PLEASE BRING OVER SOME EXPRESSED MILK FROM TIME TO TIME.
LOOKS LIKE IT'S FINALLY TIME TO GO HOME.
MRS. TANABE.

HUH?
THAT'S IT?
AND I SUPPOSE THAT'S ABOUT IT FOR NOW.

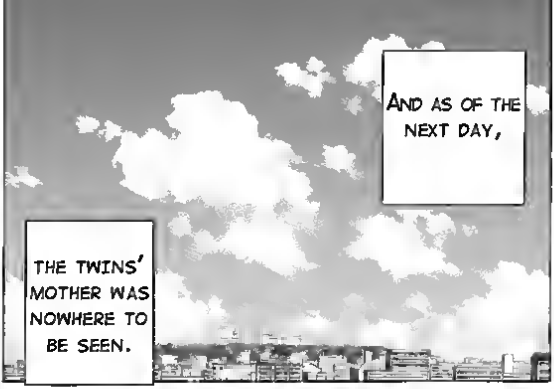
ER...
MAKE SURE YOU COME TO SEE THEM EVERY DAY!
YOUR MILK IS WHAT TIES YOU TOGETHER NOW!
KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP!
YOUR BABIES WILL GROW UP BIG AND STRONG!
THE BABIES YOU HAD AFTER A LONG BATTLE WITH INFERTILITY!
LET'S ALL TRY OUR HARDEST!

What's his deal?
FORGIVE ME...
I GET SO TIRED AFTER I EAT.
AAAAAAAAAA

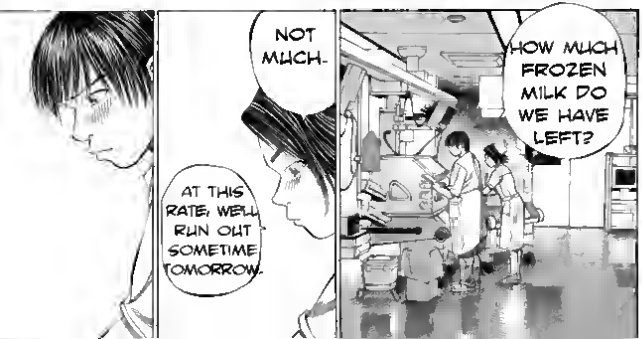
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TRY YOUR HARDEST.
MRS. TANABE,

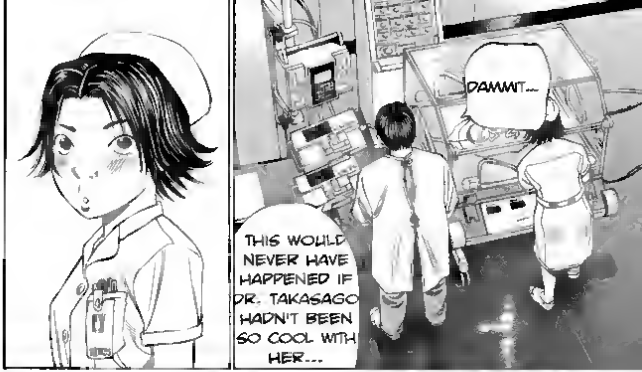
THIS REALLY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH US, AFTER ALL.

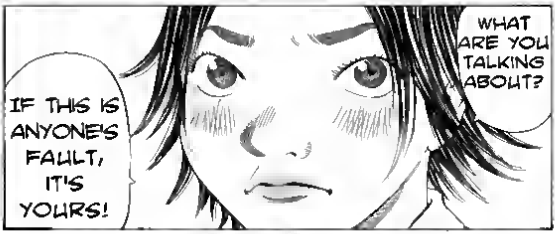
BUT WE'LL GIVE YOU ADVICE.
IT'S HOW WE MAKE A LIVING...


AND AS OF THE NEXT DAY,
THE TWINS' MOTHER WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.

squirrrt


HOW MUCH FROZEN MILK DO WE HAVE LEFT?
NOT MUCH.
AT THIS RATE, WE'LL RUN OUT SOMETIME TOMORROW.


DAMMIT...
THIS WOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED IF DR. TAKASAGO HADN'T BEEN SO COOL WITH HER...


WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
IF THIS IS ANYONE'S FAULT, IT'S YOURS!

nrgh!

THE ONLY THING YOU'RE GOOD FOR IS STUDYING.
YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU, RUMMY.
"LEGALLY IMPOSSIBLE", "WE'LL GIVE YOU ADVICE"--ALL GENERALITIES...
DR. TAKASAGO IS WAY TOO APATHETIC!
WHY IS IT MY FAULT!?

ピンポーン
DAMMIT...
YEAH?
WHOZIT?
ピンポーン
ding-dong
ピンポーン!
ding-dong
CLICK

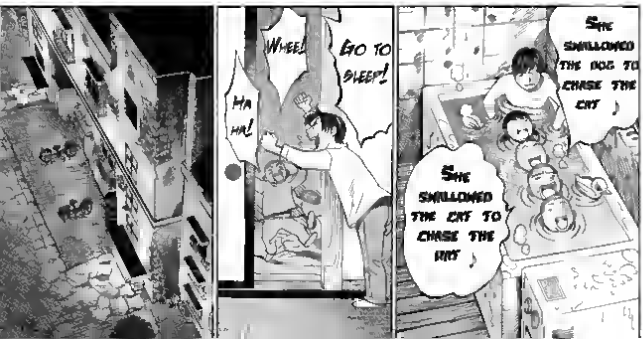
ジュウ…

IF IT ISN'T SAITO!
HUH…

DAAAD?!
DAAAD.
DAD, I'M HUNGRY!

DON'T SPILL IT!
HE'S GOT MORE THAN I DO!
AW...
HEY! SIT PROPERLY AT THE TABLE!
BUT I HATE MUSH-ROOMS!
BLECH! TASTES AWFUL!

WAAH! HE HIT ME!
IMPOS-SIBLE!
DON'T JUST SIT THERE--DEAL WITH THESE BRATS!
STAY OFFA MY SIDE!
THIS HERE IS MY SIDE!
UM...
CAN WE TALK ALONE?
MEAT! I WANT MEAT!


WHEE!
GO TO SLEEP!
HA HA!
SHE SWALLOWED THE DOG TO CHASE THE CAT ♪
SHE SWALLOWED THE CAT TO CHASE THE RAT ♪

glug
splosh
WIFE'S A NURSE, Y'SEE...
TODAY SHE'S GOT THE NIGHT SHIFT.
SO, UH...
WERE GOING TO RUN OUT OF MILK TOMORROW.
TELL ME...
WAS IT SO WRONG OF ME TO SAY ALL THAT TO MRS. TANABE?
SHE MIGHT'VE HAD A ROUGH TIME WITH HER FERTILITY TREATMENTS.
BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HER BABIES!
shloop

AND YET YOU SAY THAT WHAT SHE'S DOING IS RIGHT?
WHERE IS THERE ANY LOGIC IN REFUSING TO ACCEPT THEM?
IF YOU REALLY STOP TO THINK ABOUT THOSE TWINS,
PEOPLE HAVE KIDS LEFT AND RIGHT WITHOUT EVEN THINKIN' ABOUT IT.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
FRANKLY, IT'S RISKY DAMN BUSINESS.
HELL, I MEAN, HAVIN' A BABY--

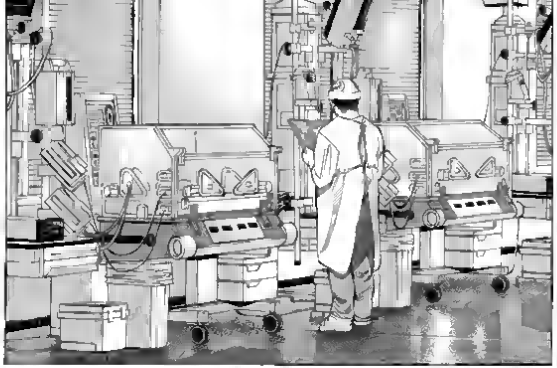
THEY COULD GROW UP TO BE GANGSTERS... CRIMINALS...
HAVIN' A KID MEANS ACCEPTIN' ALL THAT.
YOU GOT FOUR LIKE WE DO, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL WIND UP WITH.
AND IF YOU'RE NOT READY TO TAKE ON THAT RISK,
YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE A BABY.
MAKES SENSE, RIGHT?

SO BY THAT LOGIC, NO ONE SHOULD BE HAVIN' KIDS.
TAKIN' ON A PREEMIE, SAME THING.
THAT WOMAN KNOWS WHAT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO DO...
ゴロン
fwump
I BEEN A NEONATAL DOCTOR FOR A WHILE NOW,
AND NO PARENT IS EVER COMPLETELY CALM WHEN THEY SEE THEIR PREMATURE INFANT.

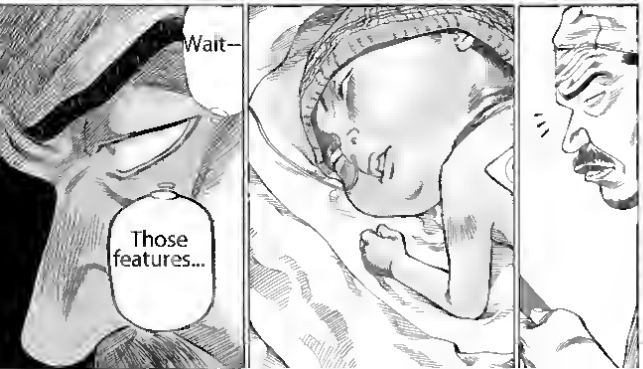
FAMILY... SOCIETY... THEIR OWN CONSCIENCES...
EVERYTHIN' CLOSIN' IN ON 'EM.
Yaaaaawn
FOR THAT COUPLE, THERE'S A MILLION POINTIN' FINGERS, ACCUSIN' 'EM.
WHAT THEY NEED NOW, I RECKON,
...IS SOMEONE TO JUST BE THERE, NOT CHASIN' 'EM INTO A CORNER.
ZZZ
BUT Y'KNOW ...
IT'LL TAKE TIME...

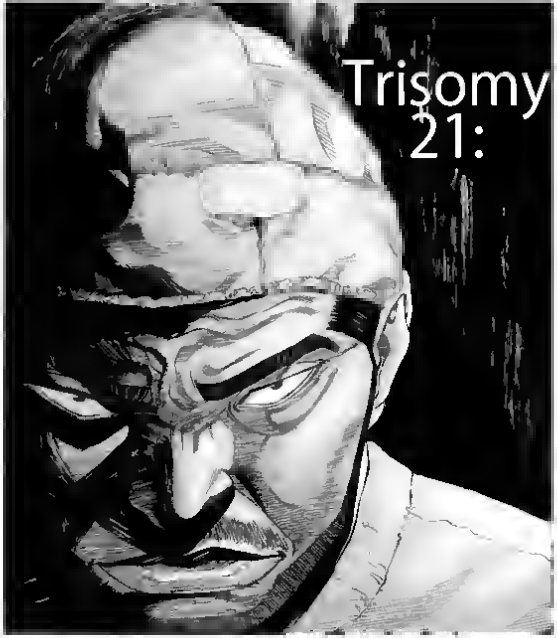
THE NEXT DAY,
THE TWINS' MOTHER CAME BY.
THANK YOU--
I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME!

WHETHER I WANT TO OR NOT,
MY BREASTS KEEP MAKING MORE...
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I THROW OUT,
I KEEP MAKING MORE.
EVEN MY BODY IS ACCUSING ME--
TELLING ME TO BE A MOTHER ALREADY...

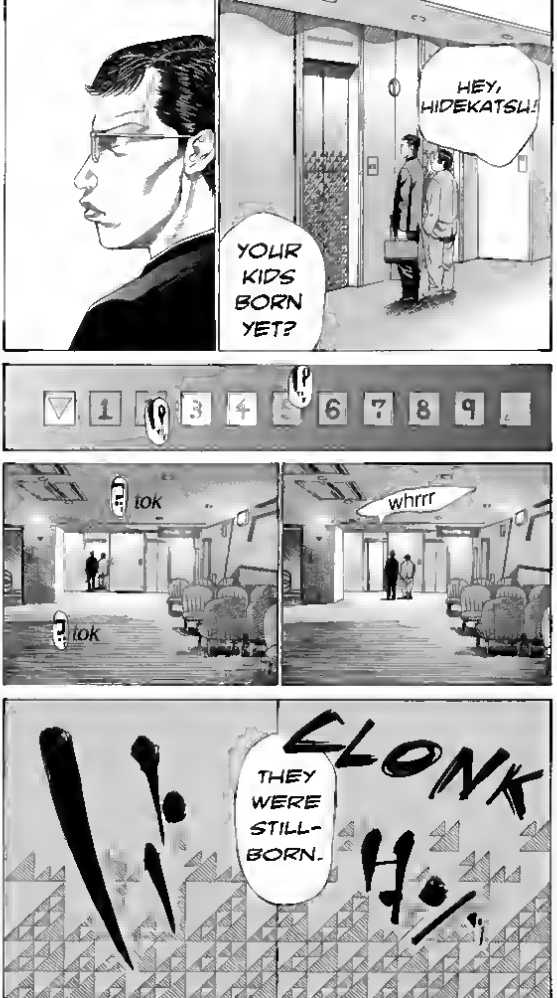


I thought the little one had more residual milk* than his brother
but he doesn't have much gas in his intestine
That might mean he's got an intestinal blockage somewhere
But why?
*milk that remains in the stomach several hours after feeding

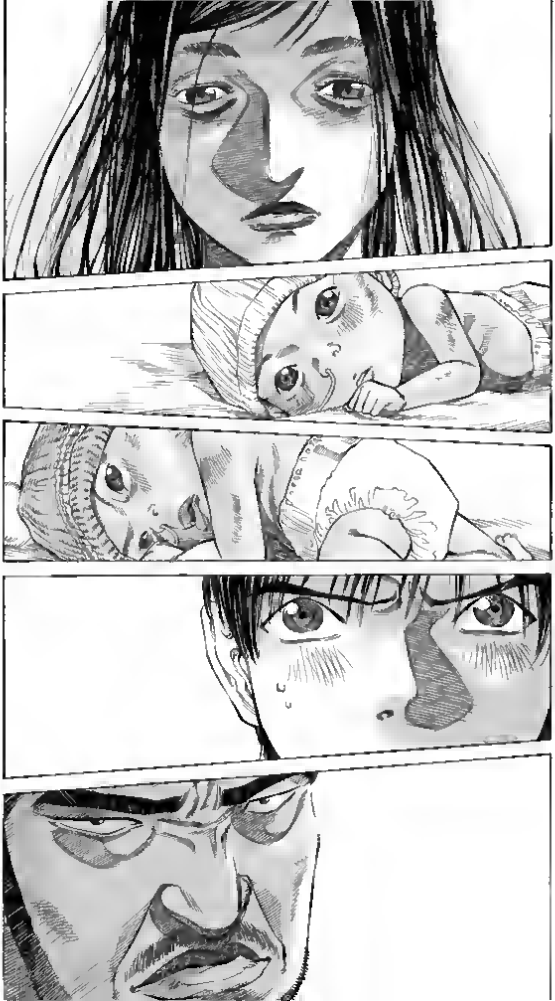

Wait--
Those features...


Trisomy
21:

DOWN SYNDROME.

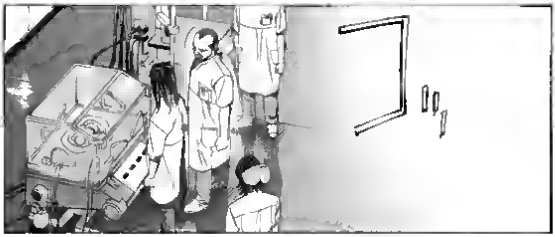

HEY, HIDEKATSU!
YOUR KIDS BORN YET?
1
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
tOK
tOK
whrrr
CLONK
THEY WERE STILL-BORN.

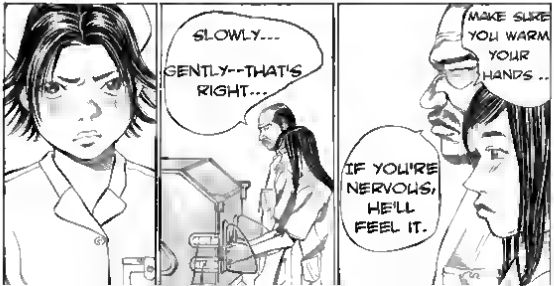
#26
Prediction and Results

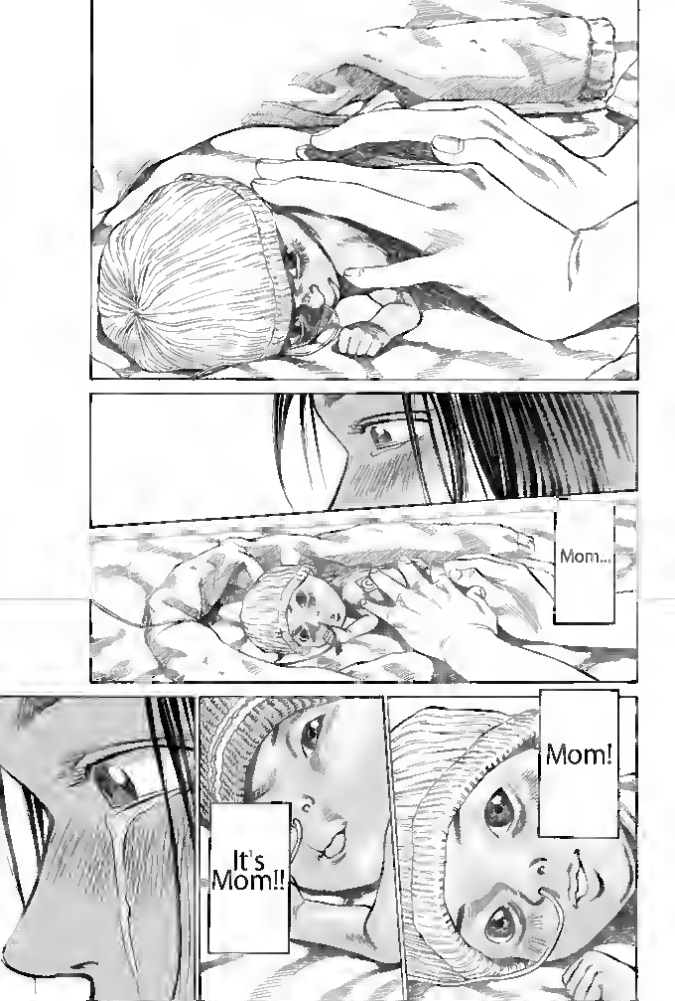


HUH?

CAN I TOUCH HIM...?

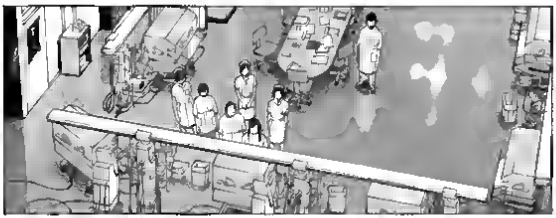


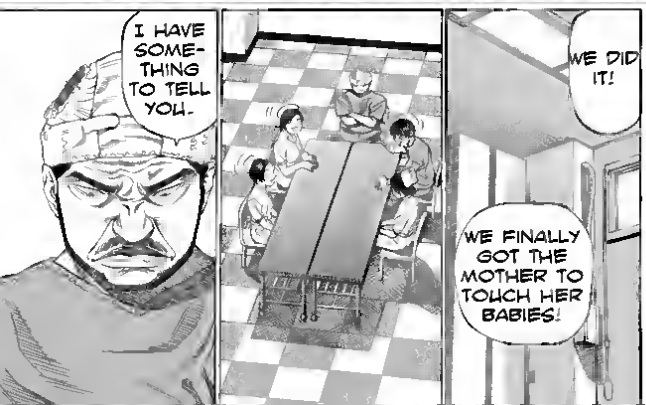

SLOWLY...
GENTLY--THAT'S RIGHT...
MAKE SURE YOU WARM YOUR HANDS ..
IF YOU'RE NERVOUS, HE'LL FEEL IT.


Mom...
Mom!
It's Mom!!

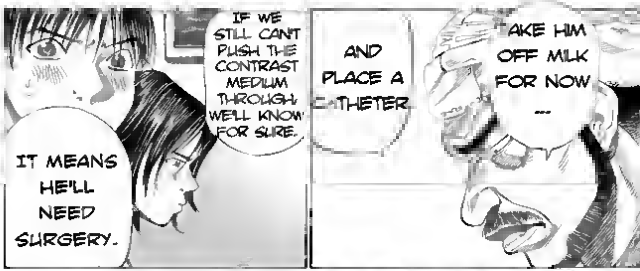
So cute.
When they're a little bigger, you can hold them.

IT ALL BEGINS WITH A TOUCH.
FEEL HIM WITH YOUR BODY.

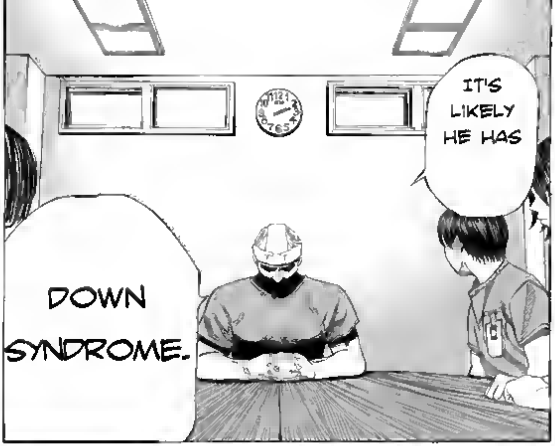



I HAVE SOME-THING TO TELL YOU.
WE DID IT!
WE FINALLY GOT THE MOTHER TO TOUCH HER BABIES!

THE YOUNGER OF THOSE TWINS MIGHT HAVE AN INTESTINAL BLOCKAGE.
THERE'S NO CONTRAST MEDIUM PAST THE DUODENUM.


IF WE STILL CAN'T PUSH THE CONTRAST MEDIUM THROUGH, WE'LL KNOW FOR SURE.
IT MEANS HE'LL NEED SURGERY.
AND PLACE A CATHETER.
TAKE HIM OFF MILK FOR NOW ...

IS THAT ALL?


IT'S LIKELY HE HAS
DOWN SYNDROME.

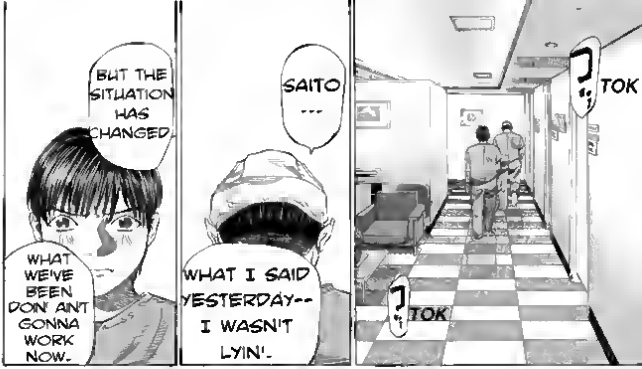
WAIT...
SO WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY, EXACTLY.
THE BLOCKAGE COULD BE A COMPLICATION OF THAT.
CAN'T BE CERTAIN WITHOUT THE TEST RESULTS, BUT THAT'S MY GUESS.

I'M SAYIN' HE'S DISABLED.
IN A MATTER OF SPEAKIN'.
D- DISABLED...
THE MAIN IMPAIRMENT IS DELAYED COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT...
DEFECTS IN THE HEART AND OTHER ORGANS, POLYDACTYLY (EXTRA AND/OR WEBBED FINGERS), CROSSED EYES...
IT OCCURS ON AVERAGE IN 1 IN 1,000 BIRTHS.
MORE OFTEN WHEN THE MOTHER IS OLDER.

THEY HAVE CHARACTERISTIC SLANTED, ALMOND-SHAPED EYES.
HENCE THEY WERE ONCE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AS "MONGOLOIDS".
THAT'S NOT TO SAY...
THAT PREJUDICE TOWARD THE DISABLED DOESN'T STILL EXIST TODAY.
WE'LL FIND OUT FOR SURE A WEEK AFTER THE TEST COMES BACK.
I WANT BOTH PARENTS TOGETHER WHEN WE TELL THEM.

WHAT CHOICE DO WE HAVE?
FUDGE THE TRUTH NOW AND IT'LL ONLY HURT OUR TRUST.
BUT THAT'S AWFUL ...
THE TWINS' MOTHER IS ONLY JUST STARTING TO ACCEPT THEM...
THEN CAN WE AT LEAST KEEP IT FROM HER?
TELL THE FATHER FIRST, MAYBE?
AND WOULD TELLING ONLY THE FATHER BE MUCH BETTER?
TELLING THE MOTHER WOULD JUST AGITATE HER!
DIDN'T YOU SAY WE SHOULD TAKE THINGS SLOWLY?

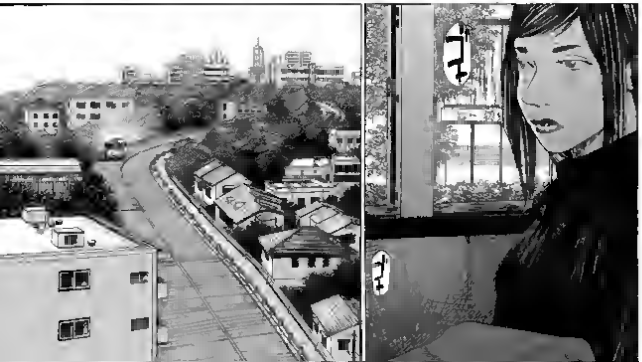
DON'T YOU REALIZE HOW HURT THE MOTHER WILL BE
WHEN SHE FINDS OUT SHE ALONE WAS LEFT OUT OF THE LOOP?
HE'D WIND UP GOING TO HIS PARENTS FOR ADVICE.
MEN ARE WEAK LIKE THAT.
DR. TAKA-SAGO...
YOU SURE WERE IN A HURRY EARLIER.
TO WAIT PATIENTLY 'TIL THEY ACCEPT THESE BABIES.
WE DON'T HAVE TIME ...
I WANTED EVERYTHING TO BE SHIPSHAPE BEFORE WE GO INTO THAT MEETING.


BUT THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED.
WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOIN' AIN'T GONNA WORK NOW.
SAITO ...
WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY-- I WASN'T LYIN'.
TOK
TOK

I GOT JUST ONE PIECE OF ADVICE FOR YOU.
MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW IT.

NEVER, EVER
GET CLOSE WITH THAT FAMILY.

SEE YOU TONIGHT.
YUP. I'LL BE HOME LATE.

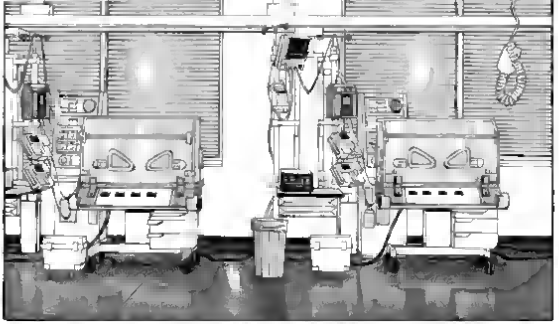

그?
그?

JUST WHEN SHE LOOKED LIKE SHE COULD BE A MOTHER...
DAMM!T ...
JUST WHEN THE MOTHER WAS FINALLY STARTING TO SHOW AFFECTION TOWARD HER BABIES...
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
RATTLE

IT'S JUST ...
SHE'S BEEN SPENDING HOURS IN FRONT OF THE INCUBATORS EVERY DAY SINCE.
IF WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING,
THEN WHO'S GOING TO SAVE THOSE BABIES?!
AND
WHAT EXACTLY CAN YOU DO?

ONE WEEK AFTER THE TEST:
THE TEST RESULTS FOR THE YOUNGER TWIN SHOW
HE HAS DOWN SYNDROME.

Family Consultation Room
Damn it all!
Dammit
Dammit...



Mom didn't come today
Hey, brother

Mom didn't come today...
Uh-huh

My.. my tummy hurts...
Hey brother

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